

OUTDOOR ENTERTAINING SAVEUR

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Peak-Season Tomatoes with Mint

P.61

Roast Chicken with Sumac & Lemon

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Fizzy Raspberry Ice Cream Floats

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A FRESH LOOK AT SUMMER

Picnics, Parties & Sunday Suppers in
Cairo, Sweden, Hawaii & Martha's Vineyard

Issue 176
Aug./Sept. 2015



An aerial, high-angle photograph of New York City at dusk or night. The city is densely packed with skyscrapers, many of which are illuminated with warm yellow and orange lights. The Empire State Building is prominent in the upper center, and the Chrysler Building is visible on the left. The Hudson River and the New York Harbor are visible in the background, with the city lights reflecting on the water. The overall atmosphere is one of a bustling, vibrant metropolis.

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Summer Entertaining

At a rosé-fueled oceanside gathering in Martha's Vineyard, guests dive into fresh tomato salad and honey-soy-marinated fluke (see page 61 for recipes).

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By Suzanne Zeidy

Cover photograph by Elizabeth Cecil

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Want to throw a **great dinner party**? Check out saveur.com/entertaining for tips, stories, recipes, and menu plans.

We can't get enough of **Hawaii**—its food or its landscape (page 24). Visit saveur.com/big-island for a bonus recipe and photos.

After perfecting your **onigiri technique** on page 17, head to saveur.com/onigiri for a guide to Tokyo's rice balls and scenes from the city.

Read about the **fresh bounty of Martha's Vineyard** (page 54), and go to saveur.com/marthas-vineyard to plan your trip.

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AUGUST/ SEPTEMBER

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Agenda

August/September 2015

Punch: A Philosophy for Entertaining

*Why offering no choice is the
best hosting strategy*

BY DAVID WONDRICH

It sounds counterintuitive, but the laws of hospitality, properly interpreted, dictate that when it comes to serving boozy drinks at home, it's better to offer your guests almost no choice at all. Hospitality is all about ensuring comfort, and there's nothing more discomfoting than promising a guest a choice that you cannot satisfy. Lay out a spread of good booze, mixers, and ice, and suddenly everyone is on the spot. *This isn't my brand. How much tonic do I put in? Do I use my fingers on the ice?* So on and so forth. Pen yourself up behind the bar with all the liquor in the house and try to bang out drinks for everyone—an Aviation here, an old-fashioned there—and as if by miracle your pleasant guests will eventually, or not so eventually, metamorphose into picky bar customers. *Could you make that Aviation with tequila instead of gin, and leave out the crème de violette?* Yes, you could, but really now.

This is why, for the past dozen years or so, I've lubricated my parties with punch. One big bowl—or even, when it's hot, Igloo cooler—of it, on a table with a lot of glasses. There's a reason why our ancestors were so devoted to “the flowing bowl.” By offering your guests one thing, you're putting them all on the same footing. Nobody has a leg up over anyone else, and everyone can relax and get their buzz on. It even turns into a sort of communal

project: Can we finish this? And meanwhile, as the punch sits on ice, it grows weaker, thus becoming self-regulating. (Here I have to admit to breaking my own rule to the extent of stocking some wine and beer for the timid few who need a little help screwing up their courage to try the punch.)

If you're going this way, though, you have to make sure that what you're serving is the least objectionable, most harmonious thing possible. Traditional punches feature a precise balance of sweet and sour, strong and weak, subtlety and spice. They were made that way for a reason. If you make five gallons of punch that's too strong or too fruity or too bitter, too weird, interesting, or spicy, you end up with four gallons of punch and an empty backyard. If you take your ego and creativity out of the mix and make the liquid equivalent of fried chicken, rich and tasty but unchallenging, you'll eventually find your guests passing around the bowl, tilting it up to their mouths to get one of the last sips. When you get the “astronaut shot,” as Washington, D.C., saloonkeeper Derek Brown calls it (from the glimpse of the tippler's face through the bottom of the glass bowl), you have a guest who is thoroughly comfortable. Mission accomplished.

Professional drinker David Wondrich is the author of Punch (Perigee 2010).





Touch of Evil Punch

Serves 8 to 10; Active: 25 min.; Total: 1 day

This fruity, slightly smoky punch from David Wondrich is named after the 1958 Orson Welles movie. "There's just enough mezcal in here to make it interesting, without making it too pungent or cloying," says Wondrich. "We seek balance in all things, but especially in punch."

- 4 lemons
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup raspberries
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup fresh lemon juice
- $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups Plymouth gin
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Vida mezcal
- 1 liter sparkling water
- Lemon wheels
- and freshly grated nutmeg, to garnish

1 One day before you plan to serve the punch, fill a 1-quart container with water and freeze to make an ice block. Using a vegetable peeler, peel the zest from the lemons in strips and place in a medium glass jar with the sugar. Seal and shake the jar to mix the sugar with the peels. Let stand in a warm place for 24 hours to infuse the sugar with the lemons' oils.

2 Add the raspberries to the glass jar and muddle with the peels and sugar until the berries are crushed.

Pour in the lemon juice and stir until the sugar dissolves. Pour the juice through a fine sieve into a bowl, pressing on the solids to extract their juices, and discard the solids. Stir in the gin and mezcal and refrigerate the punch until ready to serve.

3 To serve, pour the punch into a 1-gallon bowl and stir in the sparkling water. Unmold the ice block and add it to the punch. Garnish with lemon wheels and a grating of nutmeg.

The No-Measuring Three-Ingredient Cocktail Plan

(AND FIVE OTHER IDEAS FROM PRO BARTENDERS
FOR SWEAT-FREE ENTERTAINING)

1 MAKE A THREE-BOTTLE COCKTAIL You won't find a simpler drink in the world than pouring three bottles into a bowl for a large-batch Negroni Sbagliato—a combination of Campari, sweet vermouth, and prosecco (which takes the place of the traditional gin). Jeffrey Morgenthaler, bar manager of Clyde Common in Portland, is known for barrel-aging cocktails and other fancy bartender tricks. But when he throws a party, he makes this easy, lightly bitter drink. Here's how: Chill one bottle each of Campari, Cinzano sweet vermouth, and good, inexpensive

prosecco. Dump all three in a serving bowl with a hefty block of ice and serve with big ice cubes.

2 SQUEEZE CITRUS THE NIGHT BEFORE If you decide to go the sour-mixed-drinks route, the conventional wisdom on citrus juice is that it goes bad within a few hours. "That's a myth," says Don Lee of Cocktail Kingdom in New York City. "I did a bunch of tests, and no one will notice if the juice was squeezed the night before." The booze will preserve the citrus in pre-batched cocktails.

3 PRE-BOTTLE COCKTAILS Erick Castro of San Diego's Polite Provisions keeps pre-made cocktails in 750 ml bottles (you can use empty wine or liquor bottles) in his fridge for hosting on the fly. We especially like the Full Windsor, his riff on the Vieux Carré. Here's how to make it: In a large bowl, stir 7 ounces each Scotch whisky and apple brandy, 5 1/4 ounces Carpano Antica sweet vermouth, 1 3/4 ounces Bénédictine liqueur, 3 1/2 ounces

water, and 1/4 ounce each Angostura and Peychaud's bitters until blended. Using a funnel, pour the cocktail into a clean 750 ml bottle and seal with a cap or cork. Refrigerate until ready to drink or for up to 3 weeks. Serve it over large ice cubes in rocks glasses with orange twists.

4 DISPLAY A COCKTAIL MENU Castro also posts a menu with ingredients, so that no one needs to interrupt a conversation to find out what's in the drink.



5 USE A BUNDT PAN FOR DECORATIVE ICE Morgenthaler uses a cake pan and simple garnishes for showstopping ice. To make it, put edible flowers or citrus wheels in a Bundt pan or square Tupperware container, cover with ice, add water to the top, and freeze for two days. Once it's frozen, run the pan under hot water to release the mold.

6 BUY YOURSELF A BOTTLE OF VERMOUTH A host who always has a glass in hand is a host who is having fun. But that calls for something lower proof. To that end, Toby Maloney of The Violet Hour in Chicago recommends Dolin Blanc on the rocks with a grapefruit peel. It's tasty, it's festive, and you can sip on it all night.

Bartender Jeffrey Morgenthaler prepares a Negroni Sbagliato at home.

DRINKING RITUALS FROM ALL OVER...

Vietnam

The Vietnamese phrase that follows each toast is *tram phan tram*, which means "100 percent." After standing up and consuming 100 percent of their drinks, revelers shake hands as a sign of camaraderie.

Kazakhstan

Drunk both ceremoniously and casually, *kumis* (traditionally made of fermented mare's milk) is the country's national drink. It's customary to pour whatever is not finished back into the communal jug, so that nothing is wasted.

Georgia

At feasts in this former Soviet republic, a *tamada*, the official toast master, leads a series of 20 or more toasts. For each round, the *tamada* gives a rousing speech before anyone can drink.

Bolivia

Miners commonly drink sugarcane-based *cocoroco*, which is more than 90 percent alcohol. They also leave it in the tunnels for El Tio, the lord of the underground, in exchange for safe passage.





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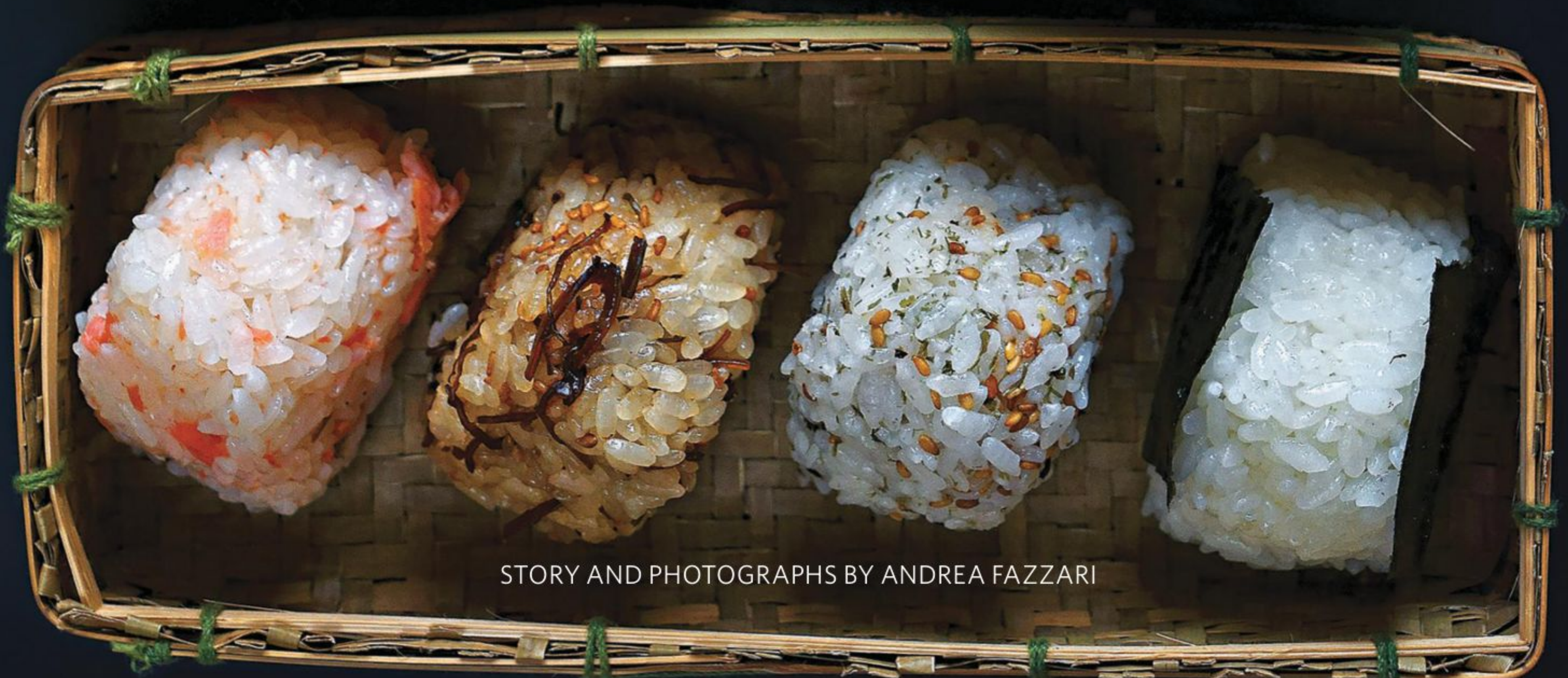
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AN OBSESSIVE'S ODE TO ONIGIRI



JAPAN'S SIMPLE, COLORFUL RICE BALLS ARE THE IDEAL PARTY SNACK



STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREA FAZZARI

As a portrait and travel photographer, I've visited and lived in many countries, but Japan is an exceptional place to me. So exceptional, in fact, that I made Tokyo my home earlier this year. In daily life, there is a near reverence for detail and quality that I have not seen elsewhere. This is apparent in almost everything, but for me it's most poetically expressed in the simple rice ball snacks called onigiri. I love their versatility, their minimalism, and the fact that even in the humblest of places, onigiri are made with attention and care.

Onigiri are portable parcels that fit in the palm of your hand (*nigiri* means "to squeeze"). They are sold in tiny rice shops, izakayas, department-store food halls, and convenience stores, like 7-Eleven. They look a little bit like sushi, but they aren't seasoned with mirin the way sushi rice is. Some are wrapped in crisp nori or fresh shiso leaves; others are naked or made with rice mixed with ingredients like sesame seeds. I like the classic fillings, such as salmon, kombu, and *tarako* (salted cod roe). *Umeboshi* (pickled plum) is also quite popular, as is tuna, shrimp tempura, and even cheese.



Reiko Yamada demonstrates how to form onigiri.

Before I moved to Japan, I eagerly sought out onigiri on every visit. It was my go-to quick snack, light lunch, or parting souvenir for the plane. But now that I live here, I realize that the same qualities that make them convenient snacks also make onigiri great finger food for parties—you can prepare them ahead of time, their fillings are interchangeable, and they come in fun, tidy packages. After 15 years of obsessing over them, I wanted to learn more about making onigiri for my own shop, so I visited Reiko Yamada, author of *Everyday Onigiri* (Pottoshupan 2014), in Tokyo.

I expected to learn a strict tradition—complicated techniques and precise rules passed down over centuries and centuries. But what Reiko-san reinforced was the sense that there are no rules. "Just have fun," she told me. There is no need for a rice cooker; an old pot with a lid will do. You can use whatever fillings are right for your mood. I noticed that making onigiri with Reiko-san in Tokyo—cupping the rice gently into triangles or balls and stuffing them or patting on toppings—felt just like decorating holiday cookies back in New York City. She showed me that onigiri are as simple or as fancy as you want them to be. That is their beauty.

I love the VERSATILITY of onigiri, their MINIMALISM, and the fact that even in the humblest of places, they are made with attention and care

Onigiri

Makes about 16

Active: 25 min.; Total: 1 hr. 15 min.

There are two different styles of onigiri: those that are stuffed and those that have seasonings mixed in. For the filled variety, *umeboshi* (pickled plums), cubes of salt-cured salmon, or *tarako* (cod roe) are often encased in the warm rice and then eaten as is or wrapped in nori (dried seaweed). For others, seasonings like toasted black sesame seeds, *yukari* (red shiso powder), or *sakebushi* (dried salmon flakes) are simply mixed with the rice and then shaped into the typical triangle, ball, or cylinder shapes. Most important, when shaping the rice for onigiri, take care not to compact the rice too firmly. Press until the grains

just hold together. This recipe is for basic Japanese boiled rice, which is traditional for shaping into seasoned or filled onigiri (see recipes below).

- 3 cups short-grain rice
- 4 1/2 cups water
- 2 Tbsp. kosher salt

1 Place the rice in a large bowl in the sink and then cover with water. Using your hands, massage and stir the rice until the water becomes cloudy. Drain away the cloudy water, and cover again with fresh water. Repeat massaging and draining the rice until the water no longer becomes cloudy (this will take about 8 minutes). Pour the cleaned rice into a large colander or sieve set in the sink and let drain for 30 minutes.

2 In a 4-quart, heavy-bottomed saucepan, combine the rice with 3 1/2 cups of the water and bring to a boil. Cover the rice, reduce the heat to low, and cook, stirring, until the rice absorbs all the water, about 10 minutes. Turn off the heat from under the pot but leave it on the burner, and let the rice stand, still covered, until tender, about 10 minutes.

3 Using a rice paddle or flat spoon, stir the rice to fluff and separate the grains. In a small bowl, stir the remaining 1 cup water with the salt until it dissolves. Before shaping each onigiri, dip your hands in the salt water to keep the rice from sticking to them and to lightly season the rice while shaping it.

Seasoned: For each seasoned onigiri, scoop about 1/4 cup of the warm rice into a bowl and sprinkle with 1 tsp. toasted black sesame seeds, 1 tsp. *yukari*, or 1 tsp. *sakebushi*. Gently stir the rice with the seasoning, and then, using your hands, gently shape the rice into a triangle, ball, or cylinder.

Filled: For each filled onigiri, scoop about 1/4 cup of the warm rice into the palm of your hand and make an indentation in the rice. Place 1 whole *umeboshi*, 1 cube of salt-cured salmon, or 1 tsp. cod or salmon roe in the indentation and then, using your hands, gently shape the rice around the filling into a triangle, ball, or cylinder. Using tongs, quickly wave one 4-by-1-inch sheet of nori over an open flame until fragrant, 5 seconds, and then wrap the onigiri in the toasted nori.



Summer squash, a subspecies of edible gourds, are harvested when their rinds are still tender, so there is no need to peel them.

Why I Love It: **SUMMER SQUASH**

A SOUTHERN CHEF ON A FAVORITE INGREDIENT AND FOUR INVENTIVE WAYS TO USE IT

By Steven Satterfield Photographs by Matt Taylor-Gross

Summer squash feel Southern to me, I think, because they're in season for so long down here. As is true of any ingredient, if you know only one way to cook them, you can get sick of them, but summer squash are actually extremely versatile and soak up any flavors you add.

When I was younger, my grandmother grew crookneck squash in her garden. I remember her checking on them every couple of days because if you forgot about them, they'd grow to the size of a baseball bat. She would grill them kebab-style for our suppers.

When I worked for chef Scott Peacock at Watershed restaurant in Atlanta, he would have me cook down summer squash with sweet Vidalia onions and almost braise them in the pot until they were tender, yet I was so surprised by just how meaty their flesh remained. We used zucchini, two-toned squash, pale green *cousa* (also known as Lebanese or Syrian zucchini), and the adorably small pattypan, with their scalloped edges.

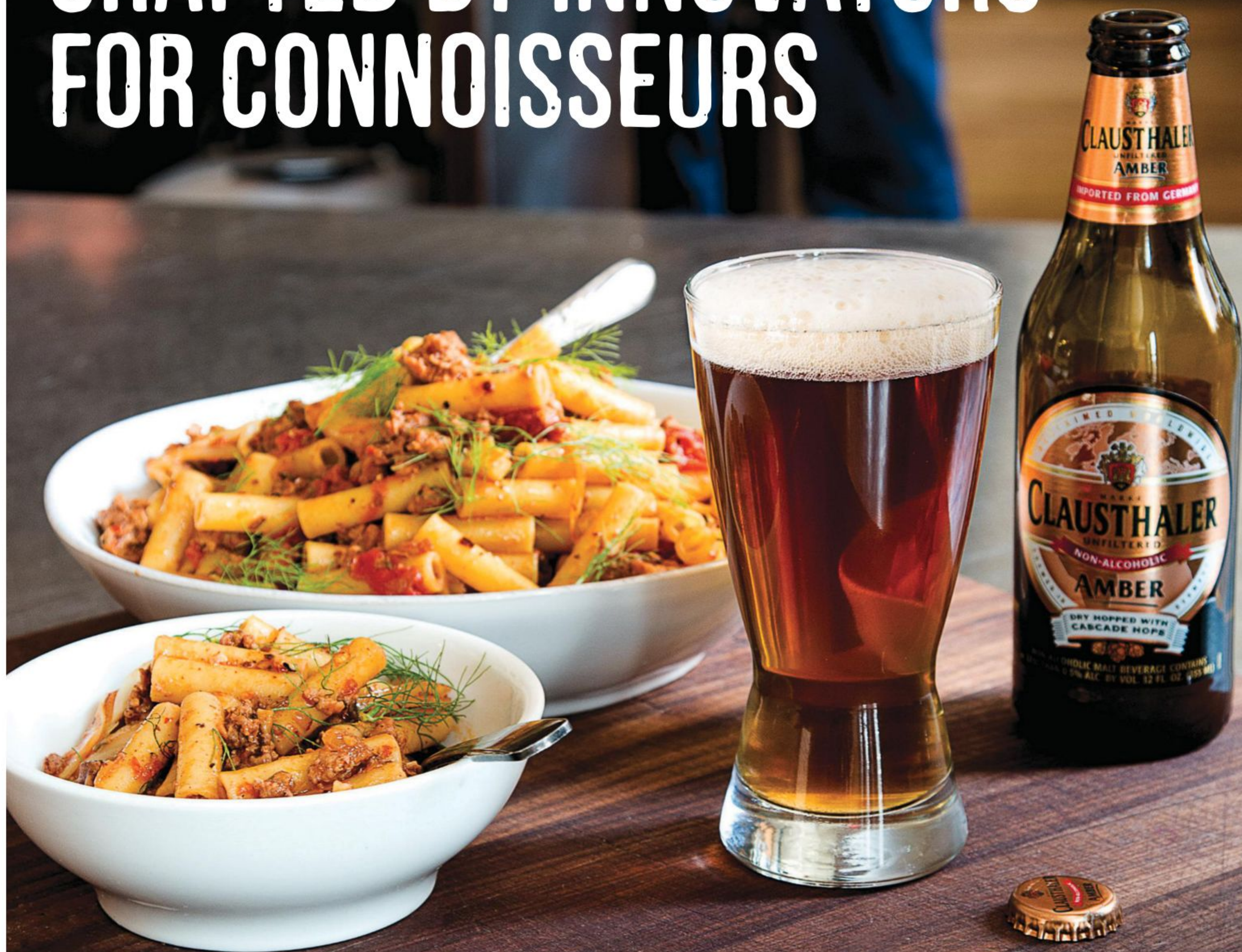
I still like to grill summer squash, of course, which allows them to take on the flavor of the smoke. After they're cooked, I

toss the charred pieces with a minty vinaigrette. And man, there's something about that treatment that 100 percent brightens the "summeriness" of the squash. I also love the idea of using squash as a noodle substitute. I cut them into strips and lightly sauté them before bathing them in a coconut milk broth flavored with ginger, garlic, and chiles—like a Thai soup.

While traveling I've also discovered recipes from people who are as obsessed with squash as I am. One chef I know grates them and bakes them in oil, almost like a squash hash brown. I ran with that idea and added more oil to make the squash soften into an herby confit for toast. A home cook I met bakes zucchini like apples, tossing them with cinnamon and sugar and adding an oat crumble topping. That dish blew my mind and made me realize what I love most about summer squash—their chameleon-like nature. Now I serve that same dessert just to see if people can guess what's in it.

Steven Satterfield is the executive chef of Miller Union in Atlanta.

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WHY I LOVE IT

Herbed Squash Confit

Makes 4 cups

Active: 15 min.; Total: 1 hr. 20 min.

The spongelike nature of squash makes them an ideal candidate to cook confit, says chef Steven Satterfield. They soften into the warm oil, absorbing the flavor of the herbs.

- 2 lbs. summer squash or zucchini, or a mix of both, trimmed**
- 1 tsp. kosher salt, plus more**
- 2 marjoram sprigs, plus more to garnish**
- 2 oregano sprigs**
- 2 thyme sprigs**
- 2 cups olive oil**
- Baguette or toast slices, for serving**

1 Heat the oven to 300°. On the large holes of a box grater, grate the squash and transfer to a large colander set in the sink. Toss the squash with the 1 teaspoon of salt until evenly combined and then let the squash stand for 20 minutes.

2 Using your hands, squeeze the squash to remove any liquid and spread it out in an even layer in a 9-by-13-inch baking dish. Tuck all the herb sprigs into the squash and then pour the olive oil over the squash to submerge.

3 Bake until the squash is very tender and lightly browned at the edges, about 45 minutes. Let cool and season with salt. Spoon onto toast slices and garnish with fresh marjoram to serve.

Toss hunks of grilled squash in a minty vinaigrette to brighten their charred, smoky flavor.

Treat this tender confit like a relish and spread it on toast or use it as a chunky sauce for grilled fish.

Grilled Squash and Scallions with Chile-Honey Vinaigrette

Serves 4

Active: 30 min.; Total: 1 hr.

Grilling adds smokiness to summer squash, a flavor that Satterfield balances with bright ingredients like vinegar, chile, and honey. Serve this on its own as a light dinner.

- 2 Tbsp. vegetable oil**
- ½ tsp. crushed red chile flakes**
- 1 Tbsp. champagne vinegar**
- 2 tsp. honey**
- 1½ tsp. fresh lemon juice**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 1½ lbs. summer squash or zucchini, or a mix of both, cut into 2-by-1-inch pieces**
- 2 scallions, trimmed**
- 10 mint leaves, torn by hand**

1 In a small saucepan, heat the oil and chile flakes over medium until fragrant, 2 minutes. Whisk in the vinegar, honey, and lemon juice, and season with salt and pepper. Pour the vinaigrette into a bowl and add the squash. Toss to combine and marinate for 30 minutes.

2 Light a grill. Lift the squash from the marinade and place on the grill along with the scallions and cook, turning once, until just tender and charred on the outside, 10 to 15 minutes.

3 Transfer the scallions to a cutting board, thinly slice, and place in the vinaigrette along with the grilled squash and three-quarters of the mint. Season with salt and pepper, then transfer the squash to a serving platter. Garnish with the remaining mint before serving.

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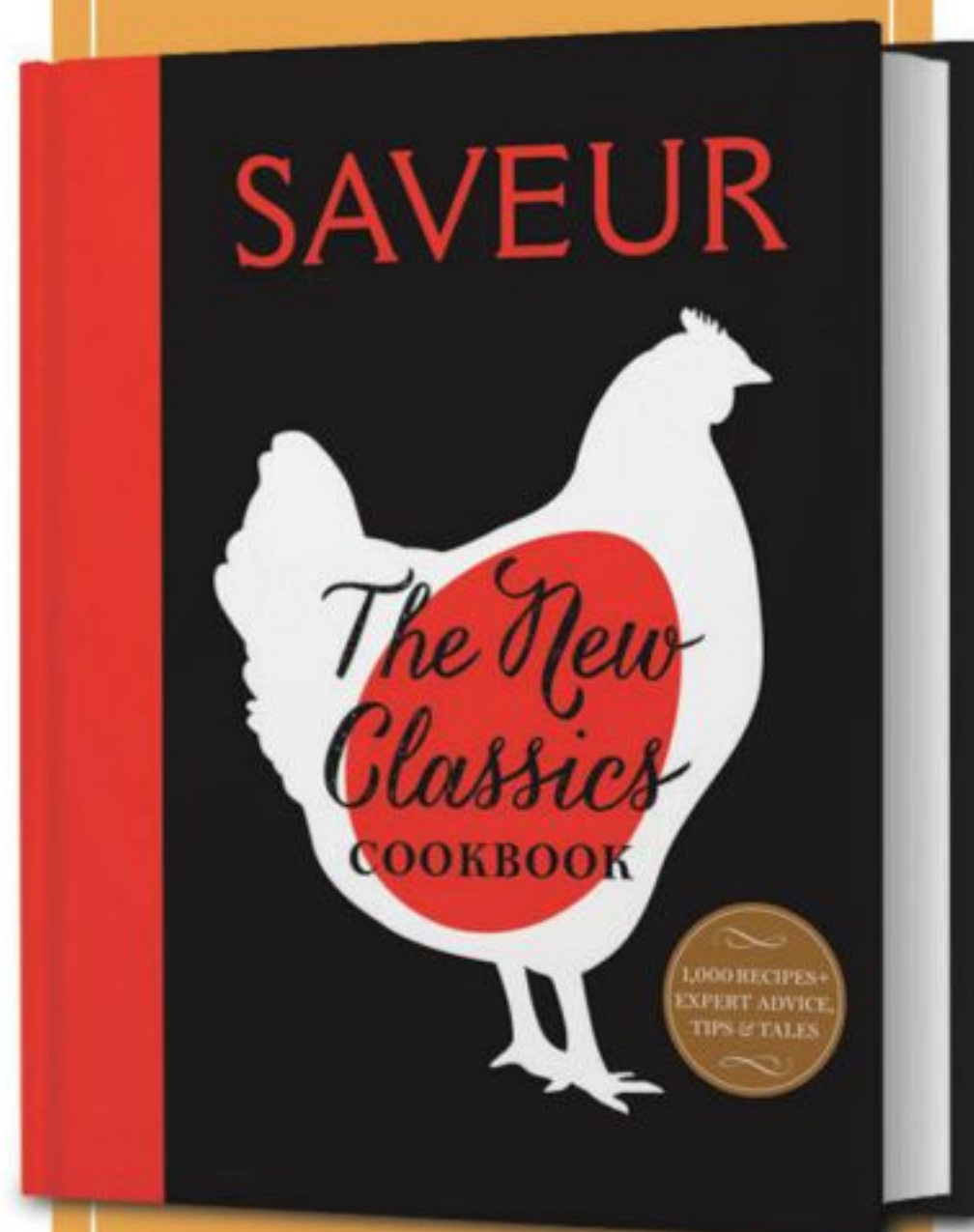
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Add grilled firm tofu, chicken thighs, or pork tenderloin to this Thai-inspired dish.

Sautéed Squash and Shrimp with Coconut Milk and Chiles

Serves 4

Total: 40 min.

Similar to an unripe mango or green papaya, julienned squash has a slightly “green” flavor that pairs well with the classic Thai flavors in this quick, brothy dish.

- 3 Tbsp. coconut or vegetable oil**
- 2 garlic cloves, minced**
- One 2-inch piece ginger, peeled and minced**
- 1 cup coconut milk**
- 1 cup vegetable or shrimp stock**
- 1 Tbsp. cane syrup (optional)**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 8 jumbo shrimp, head and shell on**
- 2 1/2 lbs. summer squash or zucchini, or a mix of both, trimmed and julienned**
- 1 red Fresno chile, stemmed and thinly sliced**
- Basil and cilantro leaves, to garnish**
- Lime wedges, for serving**

1 In a small saucepan, heat 1 tablespoon of the coconut oil over medium. Add the garlic and ginger and cook, stirring, until soft, 2 minutes. Stir in the coconut milk, stock, and syrup, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for 10 minutes. Season the broth with salt and pepper and keep warm.

2 In a large skillet, heat the remaining 2 tablespoons coconut oil over high. Season the shrimp with salt and pepper, then add to the skillet and cook, flipping once, until just cooked through, 3 minutes. Transfer the shrimp to a plate and then return the skillet to the heat. Add the squash and cook, tossing frequently, until just tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove the squash from the heat and season with salt and pepper.

3 Spoon the broth into 4 serving bowls along with the squash and shrimp. Garnish with the chile, basil, and cilantro, and serve with lime wedges.

WHY I LOVE IT

Zucchini Crisp

Serves 6 to 8

Active: 30 min.; Total: 1 hr. 40 min.

Macerating zucchini in sugar creates a syrup that conjures flavors of sweet melons in this surprising dessert.

- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 cup rolled oats**
- 1/2 cup packed dark brown sugar**
- 3/4 tsp. kosher salt**
- 1/4 tsp. freshly grated nutmeg**
- 8 Tbsp. chilled unsalted butter, cut into 1/2-inch cubes**
- 3 lbs. zucchini, peeled and cut into 1-inch chunks**
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar**
- 2 tsp. apple cider vinegar**
- 2 tsp. fresh lemon juice**
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon**
- 1/2 tsp. ground ginger**
- Buttermilk or lemon ice cream, for serving**

1 In a medium bowl, stir 3/4 cup of the flour with the oats, brown sugar, 1/4 teaspoon of the salt, and the nutmeg. Using your fingers, rub the butter into the oat mixture until it forms clumps. Refrigerate until ready to use.

2 In a large bowl, toss the zucchini with the remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt, the granulated sugar, vinegar, and lemon juice and let stand for 10 minutes. Squeeze the juice from the zucchini and pour it into a small saucepan. Bring the juice to a boil over medium-high heat and cook until reduced to 1/4 cup, 5 to 6 minutes. Remove the syrup from the heat and let cool completely.

3 Heat the oven to 350°. Stir the cooled syrup back into the zucchini and then stir in the remaining 1/2 cup flour, the cinnamon, and ginger until evenly combined. Scrape zucchini into an 8-inch-square baking dish and sprinkle evenly with the topping. Bake until the topping is golden brown and the zucchini is bubbly and tender, 1 hour. Serve hot and topped with a scoop of ice cream.



Cinnamon, ginger, and cider vinegar lend a spicy warmth to zucchini in this crisp.



Step 3

Preheat oven to CONVECTION/ROAST 400°F. Using convection provides a restaurant-quality caramelized crust.

Step 4

Insert integrated temperature probe into thickest part of tenderloin. Set to 125°F for perfect medium-rare.

Step 5

The oven chimes when roast is ready. Allow to rest for at least 10 minutes before carving.

For the full recipe, visit blog.wolfgourmet.com



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Big Island Family Meal

IN HAWAII'S VALLEY OF THE KINGS, ONE FAMILY, BROADLY DEFINED—DISTANT COUSINS, PETS, A COMPLETE STRANGER—SHARES A POTLUCK FEAST AT AN ANNUAL GET-TOGETHER

By Shane Mitchell
Photographs by James Fisher

I shift my Jeep into four-wheel-drive and inch my way down the narrow, roughly paved road that skims the edge of the Kohala mountain range on the windward side of Hawaii's Big Island. The steep descent is treacherous at the best of times, one side plummeting 2,000 feet to a black-sand beach. I drive past tsunami evacuation signs and the occasional pickup truck roaring around a blind switchback in the opposite direction. Guardrails? Who said anything about guardrails? And then I ford the streams that run off Hi'ilawe Falls. It's a hell of a journey for a party.

I'm heading to an annual gathering hosted by Jayson and Alberta Mock Chew, taro farmers in the Waipi'o Valley, also known as the Valley of the Kings for the many Hawaiian rulers who called it home. Far from the tiki bars and surf shops on the island's resort side, these Hawaiians know how to celebrate their culture without the clichés. The Mock Chews

gather every year under a grove of monkey pod trees beyond the farm's taro plots, and one integral ingredient is on full display: *'ohana*. It's the term for family (the root word, *'ohā*, refers to the corm—or tuberous stem—of the taro plant, considered the sacred “staff of life” in the South Pacific), and the Mock Chews have a large one. In Hawaiian, *'ohana* can extend to distant cousins, adoptees, stray cats, and even, in certain circumstances, friends from distant shores.

When I arrive, the Mock Chews have set up picnic tables, camp chairs, propane-fired woks, and ice chests filled with Longboard Lagers. Children cling dizzily to tire swings, while teenagers splash in a clear stream. A herd of wild horses appears beyond the farm's paddock gates. Dogs bark, happily free of their leashes.

Danny Akaka Jr., the author's friend, entertains extended members of the Mock Chew family (canines included) at a gathering on the Big Island of Hawaii.

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Wild horses graze in the Waipi'o Valley, famous for its taro plants; Polynesians brought the plant with them when they first arrived on Hawaii's shores.

Alberta Mock Chew is one of those “green thumbs” who can grow a mature tree from a mango pit. Her tropical cultivars are scattered throughout her property: mangosteen, cacao, banana, grapefruit, lilikoi. As I take a handful of ripe white guava, her daughter Kahea, whose taro tattoo peeks out from beneath a tank top, unloads plastic bags filled with poi, a lilac-hued mash made from taro, freshly ground in their kitchen the day before.

Under a tarpaulin, a Mock Chew cousin, Tishia Spencer, who lives a 30-minute drive away in Waimea, chops salmon cured with coarse Hawaiian salt. She tosses the fish with *ho'i'o* fern fronds that her daughters have gathered from along the stream's edges to make her version of a traditional fern salad. “If you're starving in this valley, you're lazy,” she tells me. “There's food everywhere.”

My dear friend, Danny Akaka Jr.—who originally introduced me to the Mock Chews, his cousins on his mother's side—is flash-frying local reef fish with vegetable oil in a wok nearby. By early afternoon, others have arrived with more homey island favorites—shredded kalua pork (a slow-cooked pork butt

often made in an *imu*, or underground oven), wild boar sausages, fresh bamboo and Hamakua mushrooms, ahi tuna poke, and pineapple pie.

We gather in a large circle, holding hands, as Akaka, a respected spiritual elder, welcomes everyone to the feast.

“Blessings coming down,” he murmurs as a misty squall blows through from the ocean. Nobody runs for cover. Hungry guests turn their attention to the food: I favor the cold noodles with smoky *char siu*-style pork slices and the wild fern salad. The fronds retain a bright flavor and texture similar to asparagus, and the salted salmon adds depth and richness to the dish inspired by the valley itself. The Mock Chews' poi takes pride of place on my plate. Paired with these salty treats, it's the perfect tangy foil.

As I'm finishing the last of my chewy noodles, some boys rush up with aluminum throwing spears, eager to share the native river shrimp they've caught in the swift channels that

Some boys rush up with throwing spears, eager to share the shrimp they've caught in the swift channels of a nearby river

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Wok-Fried Shrimp with Garlic

In a large wok or cast-iron skillet, heat $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable oil over high for 5 minutes. Add 2 lbs. head- and tail-on large shrimp, season generously with kosher salt and pepper, and cook, tossing occasionally, until cooked through, 4 to 6 minutes. Add 6 finely chopped garlic cloves and cook, tossing with the shrimp, until lightly browned and the shrimp are done, 1 minute more. Transfer to a platter and serve with lemon wedges. Serves 4.



Jayson Mock Chew, the host of the gathering, harvests taro plants in the family's pond.

tumble over volcanic rock nearby. Tossed in a wok until pink and juicy and served on a banana leaf, these large clawed 'opae taste sweeter than ocean species; no wonder they were a favorite snack of ancient Hawaiians.

Cracking shrimp shells with greasy fingers, I ask how all the guests are connected.

"Almost everyone on this island is related," Jayson Mock Chew replies. "Everyone is 'ohana."

"The Polynesians were great seafarers," Akaka adds with a grin, "so hey, everyone might be a touch Hawaiian."

Someone is tuning a guitar. A ukulele and washtub bass join in. Coqui frogs begin to chirp as the sun fades over the escarpment. Surf rumbles on the beach at the end of the valley. A little girl has glow sticks woven into her hair, and more children dash around waving flashlights in the dark.

Alberta Mock Chew calls for livelier music. "Hey, we want to dance over here!"

Someone passes around Solo cups brimming with swipe, the potent hooch plantation workers once fermented on the sly in pineapple fields. It's still not sold legally, but if you know the right home brewers, it shows up at parties anyway.

I watch as a woman starts to do an impromptu hula. No leis, no fire dancers, no grass skirts. Just caught up in the moment.

Happily wrapped in the carefree embrace of this isolated valley gathering, I take a sip of my swipe and catch the lyrics to "Molokai Slide" as the 'ohana croons under the stars:

"I say-a won't you come along, we'll have a luau by the sea / We'll cook a little pig and all the coconuts are free / And what you see is what you get, in a little grass shack / I know you're gonna like it and I hope that you come back."

For more Big Island coverage, including slideshows and additional recipes from this story, see saveur.com/big-island.

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At the annual Mock Chew gathering (top), two boys spear wild shrimp in a river in the Waipi'o Valley (above); the fresh crustaceans will later be fried and served at dinner along with sweet and sticky roast pork with sesame noodles (left).

Sweet and Sticky Roast Pork with Sesame Noodles

Serves 4

Active: 30 min.; Total: 8 hr.

For their twist on classic *char siu*, Hawaiian islanders typically marinate wild boar in this Chinese-style barbecue sauce. Although traditional *char siu* includes red bean curd or food coloring to lend a distinctive red ring around the outside of the meat, it's just as tasty without it.

- 1½ lbs. pork shoulder, cut into 2-inch pieces
- ¼ cup hoisin
- 3 Tbsp. honey
- 2 Tbsp. plus 1 tsp. soy sauce
- 1½ Tbsp. shaoxing jiu rice wine (amazon.com)
- 1 tsp. Chinese five-spice powder
- Kosher salt

- One 1-lb. package dried Chinese egg noodles (amazon.com)
- 2 Tbsp. toasted sesame oil
- 3 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1 cup mung bean sprouts
- 3 scallions, dark green parts only, julienned, plus 1 whole scallion, thinly sliced, to garnish

1 In a large resealable plastic bag, combine the pork with the hoisin, honey, 2 tablespoons of the soy sauce, the rice wine, and five-spice powder. Close the top and toss to mix evenly. Let marinate in the refrigerator at least 6 hours or overnight.

2 Heat the oven to 300°. Transfer the pork and its marinade to an 8-inch-square baking dish, cover with foil, and bake until the pork is very tender, about 1½ hours. Uncover the pork and transfer to a work surface. Slice the pork crosswise into ¼-inch-thick slices.

3 Meanwhile, pour the marinade into a

small saucepan and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Cook the marinade, stirring, until reduced by two-thirds, about 4 minutes. Remove from the heat, and then stir in the sliced pork to coat.

4 In a large saucepan of boiling salted water, add the noodles and cook, stirring, until al dente, 2 to 3 minutes. Drain the noodles in a colander, and rinse under cold water. Drain the noodles once more, and then transfer the noodles to a large bowl and toss with the sesame oil.

5 In a large wok or cast-iron skillet, heat the vegetable oil over high. Add the sprouts and scallions and cook, tossing constantly, until fragrant, 20 seconds. Stir in the pork and cook, tossing, until warmed through, about 1 minute. Remove from the heat and stir in the noodles along with the remaining 1 teaspoon soy sauce until evenly combined. Transfer to a serving platter and garnish with sliced scallion before serving.

Guide to Hawaii's BIG ISLAND

WHERE TO EAT

'Ulu Ocean Grill + Sushi Lounge at the Four Seasons Resort Hualalai

Head here for one of the most spectacular oceanfront dining spots on the Kona-Kohala coast. Try the ahi tuna poke, prepared tableside, or the passionfruit-glazed wild boar barbecue in steamed bao buns. At breakfast, have the shellfish moco: crab cakes and fried eggs over shrimp fried rice. 72-100 Ka'upulehu Drive, Kailua-Kona; fourseasons.com/hualalai

Lava Lava Beach Club

Sit on the sand with a "Big Boy" mai tai and watch the sun set at this laid-back joint on Anaeho'omalua Bay. 69-1081 Ku'uali'i Place, Waikoloa; lavalavabeachclub.com/bigisland

Gramma's Kitchen

Located southeast of Waimea on the way to the Waipi'o Valley, where the Mock Chew farm is located, this Portuguese-Hawaiian café serves hearty Hawaiian *paniolo* (cowboy) dishes like oxtail soup and kalbi short ribs. 45-3625 Mamane St., Honoka'a; 808-775-9943.

Tex Drive-In

Hawaii might be the last bastion of the classic drive-in eatery. The plate lunch specials here include kalua pork with cabbage, but Tex is really famous for its hot, sugar-dusted *malasadas*, or Portuguese donuts. 45-690 Pakalana St., Highway 19, Honoka'a; texdriveinhawaii.com

WHERE TO STAY

Mauna Kea Beach Hotel

Founded by Laurance Rockefeller in 1965, this classically understated hotel has an exceptional pan-Asian art collection and faces the island of Hawaii's best white-sand beach. The hotel hosts oceanfront luaus every Tuesday and Friday and beachside clambakes Saturday evenings. 62-100 Mauna Kea Beach Drive, Kohala Coast; princeresortshawaii.com

Puakea Ranch

A cluster of restored Hawaiian bungalows sits on this secluded ranch with sweeping views of the Maui Channel. Each has a fully equipped kitchen for guests, who are invited to pick vegetables and greens in the garden or gather fresh-laid eggs at the chicken coop. 56-2864 Akoni Pule Highway, Hawi; puakearanch.com

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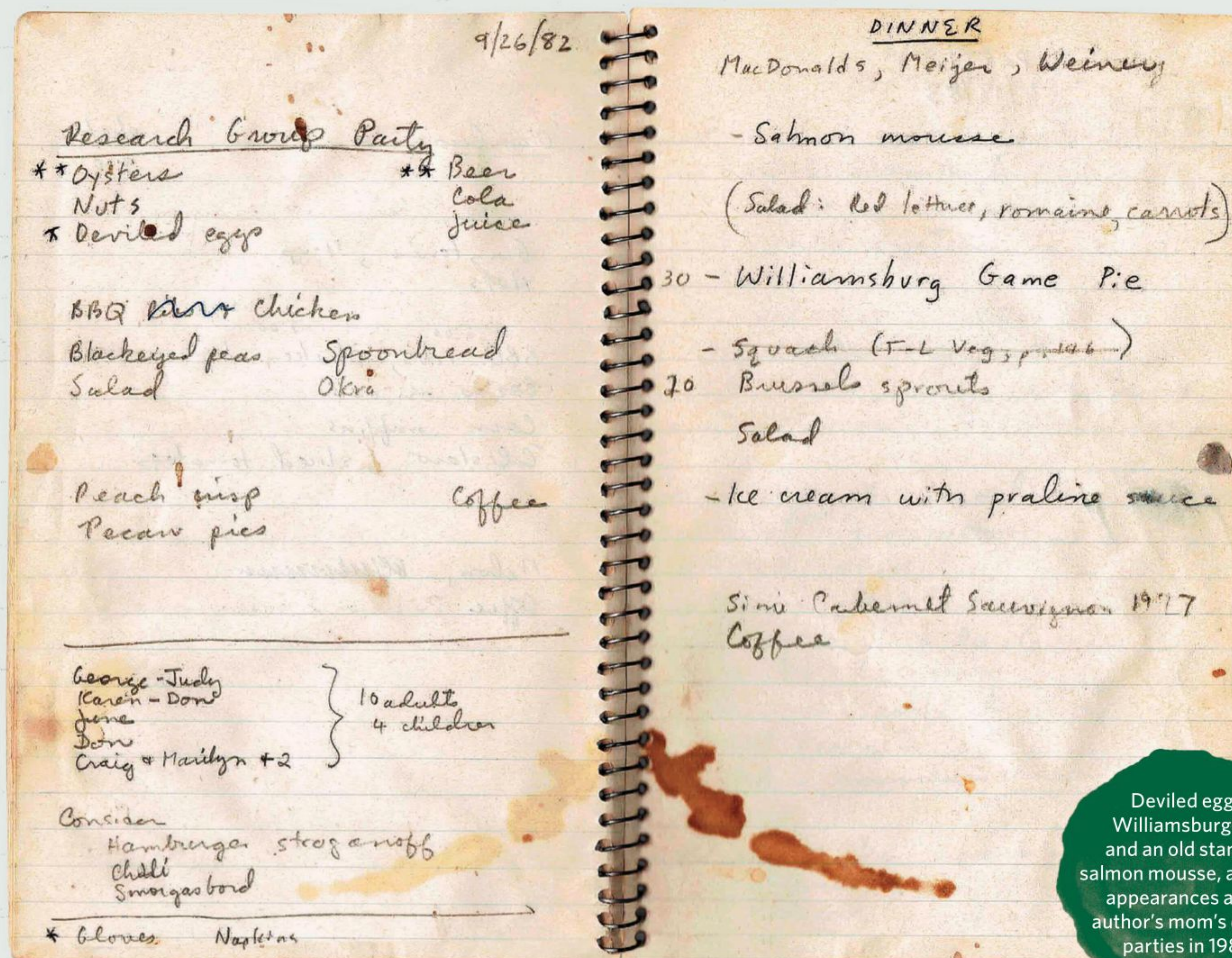
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Dinner Party Diaries

PORING OVER 40 YEARS OF FAMILY JOURNALS, **ANDREW SEAN GREER** DISCOVERS THE PERFECT FORMULA FOR MAKING A CROWD-PLEASING MENU



Deviled eggs, Williamsburg pie, and an old standby, salmon mousse, all made appearances at the author's mom's dinner parties in 1982.

This January, my mother turned 70, and, in a mood of giddy nostalgia, she brought out an old college-ruled notebook: one of the journals in which she's kept a record of all the dinner parties she's hosted since 1976. Ever my mother's son, I have a similar journal. But I am a writer and she is a chemist. Mine features stories and narratives and feelings about the dinners I've hosted, whereas hers reads like laboratory notes—just the meal plan and who was invited. No digressions, no extraneous comments.

"Salmon mousse," she announced, reading the first entry. "My God, I must have made that a hundred times. For the Kaufmans and Hurleys, do you remember them?" I did not; I was five and could barely tell apart the scientists she entertained in those years. But I did remember that salmon mousse. Pink, jiggling, molded in the curved shape of a fish.

"How do you plan a meal?" I asked my mother. She considered this, sipping her red wine. "You start with something you want to make, and you round it out with old favorites. Like salmon mousse," she told me. "Same as a lab experiment: only one variable at a time."

How fascinating to go over the decades with her, there on the couch with the wine. First, the adventurous period of youth: making *pirozhki* by hand in 1977; serving quiche Lorraine and a roast leg of lamb while raising twin boys, running a laboratory, and teaching; attempting Peking duck because she saw it on Joyce Chen's PBS show. Then the middle-aged period, where ham was the "old favorite," complemented by variables of crab in phyllo and Jockey Club salad; a time of simplicity, less showing off. And the recent era of rediscovered adventure: Thai food and mango salad, taken from one of her 200 cookbooks.

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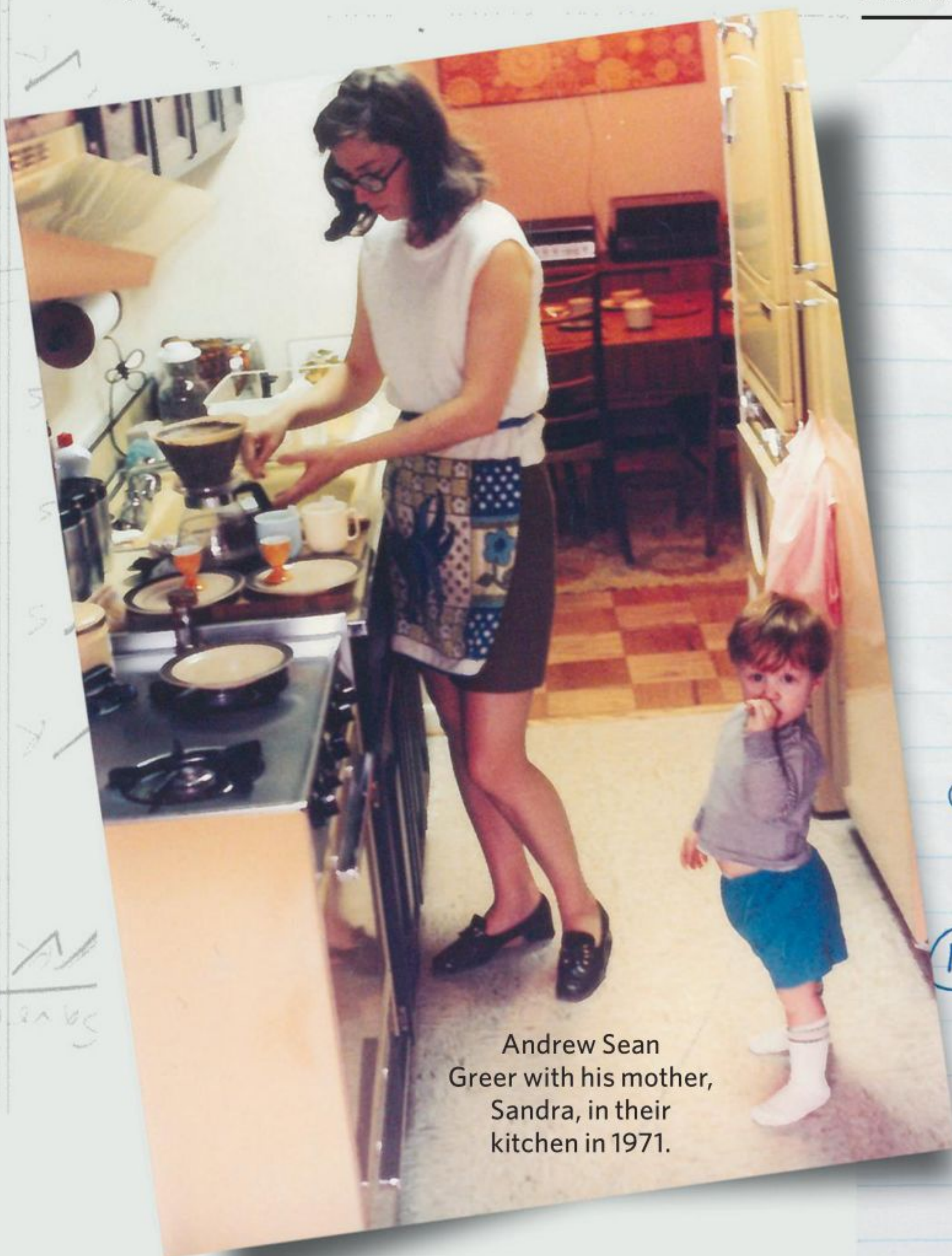


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Andrew Sean Greer with his mother, Sandra, in their kitchen in 1971.

And yet, despite the wide variety of her cooking, she was right: There were dishes that repeated throughout the years, and they were rarely the most extravagant ones: honey chicken, a recipe from her best friend in college; broccoli bread, from another friend's mother in South Carolina; crab cakes. Despite all the foods collected from other regions and sources, what the journals showed most of all were my mother's Southern roots. She would never think of herself as a Southern cook; her own mother refused to teach her, and mine refused to make the fried chicken and macaroni salad of her childhood. Yet there it was, on almost every page: ham, biscuits, spoon bread, pecan pie. How do you plan a menu? You start with what intrigues you, yes. Something new. But you fill in with old favorites.

"Thoughts for a crowd," my mother read aloud as we passed into the entries from the '90s. A list of possible meals for large groups: boiled shrimp, jambalaya, hot dogs, and hamburgers. She laughed: "I had to write down *hot dogs*?"

Old friends came and went in her journal. Childhood pals, visiting our Maryland home from the South for a reunion. Her graduate-school friends (one of whom gave us the pound cake recipe that is still a favorite). My mother remarked how many of her old dinner guests were now dead. New friends arrived; new favorites joined the rotation. My husband's name first shows up at Christmas

The author takes a decidedly emotional approach to recording his entertaining adventures.

Dave would later I started writing again. We watched "Antique Road Show" and ate:

- Roasted Chicken w/ Plantains, Cornbread + Rum
- Garlic Citrus Sauce
- Kale, cooked
- Sweet Potato Pancakes

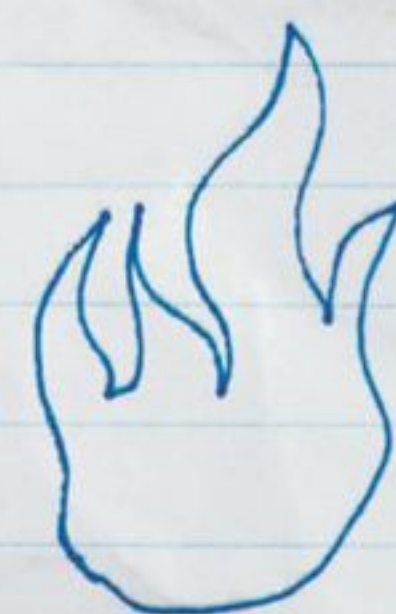
The chicken was done early. I'm not sure David liked any of it. He would later forgive. I'll probably never cook any of these again.

TRV: using T-
stuffing and
the skin inter-
sewed w/ gar-
+ green bean
On apples or
something—
make sure of
stuff under
the skin does
dry out

The night before:

MEAL OF DISASTER

- Fish in Crayon Water
- Wilted greens



The red snapper was not fresh and filled w/ tiny bones, which David hated. Even more than this, he hated the greens. Hated them. I caught him dumping them in the garbage.

I WAS FURIOUS

in 1997, along with a Christmas Eve meal of just hors d'oeuvres that, because he loved it, we have kept as a tradition ever since. My sister-in-law's name arrived in 2006, and with it, all shellfish vanished from family menus (she is allergic). Her influence is also clear in a dish of peas, ricotta, and lemon that showed up with frequency after that. There is my mother's partner, Ruth, who appeared in 1991, heralding almost five years of vegetarian dishes before she succumbed to my mother's ham. And there is my father, who, despite being her ex-husband, appeared every year or so after their divorce, including on the most recent page: a family lunch of *salade niçoise*.

I've kept my journal since 1996, but I have never shown it to my mother; I think it would strain her heart. In it, there is no menu planning. Often I get the date wrong, sometimes the year. That is because, while my mother has always written in her journal before a dinner party, I write in mine afterward. Or during. "MEAL OF DISASTER," reads one entry, with a

How do you plan a menu? You start with what intrigues you and fill in with old favorites


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FAMILY STYLE

drawing of flames. There are almost no repetitions, no old favorites, no salmon mousse of my own. It is *all* variables. My life has reached the point where dinner parties occur spontaneously, and I run to the grocery store to get something bubbling by the time eight, ten, or more people arrive. There is no plan, only the tipsy record of what happened. I think these kinds of dinner parties visit my mother in anxiety dreams.

It is too bad that there are large gaps and strange indecipherable entries in my journal, whereas in my mother's books everything is clear. Hers pass from early motherhood through divorce and the deaths of friends without a break. I, on the other hand, have three entire years unaccounted for. Was I too content to put anything down? Too distracted?

My journal chronicles the meals of a moody, passionate person; hers are efficient and calm. I see her row of journals and I am envious: This is what being an adult looks like. By 44, I should not be winging it at dinner. I should not be spilling wine over the pages. I should learn to plan a menu. I should practice with old favorites. I should have a salmon mousse.

And so. I am putting this resolution into practice at a dinner party this week for writer friends. The menu is already written in my book—chicken with sunchokes and spinach salad. To start, a favorite of mine already curing in the fridge: salmon gravlax. And for this I must apologize to my mother: It is as close as I can get. I love you, I do. But I have always hated that salmon mousse.

Orange-Marinated Gravlax

Serves 6 as a starter

Active: 25 min.; Total: 1 hr. plus 1 day

As an homage to his mother's classic salmon mousse, Andrew Sean Greer serves this gravlax flavored with sumac and a bright, sweet orange marinade. Substitute Seville or blood orange zest and juice, if you like.

- 1 whole salmon fillet, skin on (1 to 1¼ lbs.)
 - 2 Tbsp. kosher salt
 - 1 Tbsp. sugar
 - 1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
 - 1 tsp. sweet paprika
 - 1 tsp. sumac ([amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com))
 - 1 orange
 - 2 Tbsp. olive oil
 - 1½ tsp. honey
- Rye or pumpernickel toast, for serving**

1 On a work surface, dry the salmon thoroughly with paper towels and then remove any small bones still in the flesh. Transfer the salmon to a 9-by-13-inch baking dish. In a small bowl, stir the salt with the sugar, pepper, paprika, and sumac. Rub the spice mix all over the flesh and then wrap the whole dish in plastic wrap. Refrigerate the salmon for at least 24 hours, or up to 48 hours, to cure.

2 Meanwhile, for the marinade, use a Microplane grater to finely grate half the orange's zest into a small bowl. Using a vegetable peeler, peel the zest from the other orange half and slice it lengthwise into very thin strips. Juice the orange and measure out 6 tablespoons; reserve remaining juice for another use. Stir the orange juice into the grated zest along with the olive oil and honey until the honey dissolves.

3 Unwrap the salmon and transfer to a cutting board. Gently pat dry the flesh of the salmon and then cut across the grain into ¼-inch-thin slices. Arrange the slices to overlap on a large serving platter, and then spoon the marinade over the slices. Sprinkle with the orange zest strips and let stand for 30 minutes in a cool place to meld flavors before serving with toast.



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The Enlightened Entertainer

REFORMED PERFECTIONIST AND COOKBOOK AUTHOR AMY THIELEN
TRADED IN THE BIG CITY FOR 150 ACRES IN RURAL MINNESOTA
WHERE SHE LEARNED THE VALUE OF NO-RULES, CHARMINGLY LAID-BACK,
INDOOR-OUTDOOR DINNER PARTIES

By Amy Thielen
Photographs by William Hereford



On her property in rural Minnesota, cookbook author Amy Thielen grows a variety of collard greens called Vates for her grilled greens with leeks. Opposite: Fermented, fizzy, raspberry ice cream floats make a refreshing dessert. Recipes start on page 45.





For a summer party, Thielen serves her dishes buffet-style. Clockwise from far left: turnip and arugula salad with a grape vinaigrette, slow-roasted pork shoulder with parsley bagna cauda, and polenta with corn and wild rice. Recipes start on page 45.

Entertaining. As much as I love to do it, I dislike the word itself. It sounds so matronly—saying it out loud makes me break out in polka dots of cold deviled quail eggs. *Hospitality* is just as buttoned up, but a step better because it contains the suggestion of generosity, which is really what throwing a party is about. My social contract is pretty simple: I make way too much food and invite too many people, and in turn they bring too much wine and we stay up too late. I provide the dinner, and they, en masse, provide the din that soothes my excess-loving soul.

When my husband, Aaron Spangler, and I moved back home to rural Minnesota after nearly ten years of living in Brooklyn—swapping a small apartment on a hopping urban street corner for a rustic house on 150 acres of lonely Northern wilderness—we started having more parties. It happened naturally: Inviting a throng to drive down our snaking dirt road was a consequence of our sudden rural isolation and our newfound space.

Not that we didn't throw lots of parties in the city. I'd regularly set out buffets for 20 on our tiny kitchen counter. Having cooked on the line at restaurants for years, I expected to keep up my game at home, which meant my party food was either derivative of the restaurants I cooked in (shallots confited in red wine sauce—delicious but fussy) or channeled someone else's more storied rural roots (smoky Southern-style pork butt). I rarely served Midwestern food, which I thought of at the time as stodgy and stuck in the past. (I have since become one of its fiercest advocates.) Back then I dreamed about throwing classy parties—proper ones with champagne in flutes, individual appetizers, two to three courses, and well-behaved children. That dream died fast and, truth be told, painlessly, when I moved back to Minnesota. Any guests who come with expectations of haute cuisine stand corrected when they arrive to find me still peeling carrots, kicking the oven door shut with my house mocs, and taking



Guests gather around the buffet and under the boom box in the art studio.

breaks to sip a cocktail as I pound out a sauce in my mortar.

No matter what mood I'm currently chasing, I stick with a casual format, having learned that failures of the informal approach are few. As long as the food contains some ambition, some evidence of striving, the nonchalance of everything else balances out. If you like to cook, it's easy: Fixate all your obsessions on the food and let the rest of the details slide. The few times I've really tried to cover all bases of hospitality—neurotically over-tidying, or ironing cloth napkins—I've lost sight of the food. I remember sitting beneath

my own gray storm cloud at the table, trying not to deflate the party by saying something derisive about the wiry duck tendrils on my plate that had turned to frizzle over too-high heat. Suddenly it didn't matter that all those flat napkins matched. When the duck went down, it took my fancy dreams with it.

Though I used to try to control the scene, now I let things *happen*. Blame it on middle age or becoming a mom, but I've given up on trying to herd people. When I have a party, I let them wander where they may, and I've found that guests at our house tend to follow the fire. The congregation that begins in

the kitchen around my working burners often moves after dinner to Aaron's studio, where folks idle happily around the wood stove like bugs around a late-night lightbulb. Naturally, it makes sense sometimes to just throw the party *in* the garage, as we're doing today.

Aaron's studio is actually more hive than garage. Here he makes sculptures—some free-standing 3-D pieces, some bas-reliefs that hang on the wall—from local basswood. The studio is filled with chunks of wood in various states of creation and demise, not least of which is an

Fixate all your obsessions on the food, and let the rest of the details slide



Why I Love Buffets

No matter how ambitious the dinner, I always lean on my Midwestern roots and serve the food in a single buffet line. Buffets comfort me, and not just for their convenience, or because the word rhymes with duvet. A buffet reassures me that no dish—especially something foundational like rice or, in this case, polenta—will languish, cooling, at some talkative someone's elbow. Not to be a nag, but I like to see the dishes erode and disappear evenly. Buffets give good sight lines, easing the fears of even the most fretful of cooks. —A.T.

enormous basswood log that he'll peel and cut into long curling cylinders. Freshly glued-up basswood panels line the walls, and the wood chips litter the ground, making a shuffly foot mulch as reassuring as peanut shells on the floor of a dive bar.

I'm still fine-tuning the menu, which changed several times according to my mood and what I had available in the garden. The meal that eventually emerges is not what most people would peg as typically Midwestern, and it is composed of locally sourced ingredients, some so local I pulled them from the front yard. Buffet-friendly but full of competing personalities, these dishes have no pre-planned seating chart: They can mingle on the plate like old acquaintances.

I've intended the parsley bagna cauda to be eaten with the jumbo roast of slow-cooked pork, but I won't mind if the fleecy green sauce slides into my mound of wild rice-flecked polenta. And the grilled leek tops and greens come with their own sauce, a slick of bright red chile-garlic business, but if it rubs up against the pork, that's okay, too. The shredded turnips got an unexpected grape vinaigrette when I ran out of lemons, started looking around for replacement acidity, and found a few conveniently unripe grapes hanging on the vine. I don't know if they'll ever mature into a drinkable juice, but for now I'm excited to have found a cool use for the sour verjuice. As is traditional at a Midwestern feast, there's so much food that the salad can hardly fit on the plate. (The more civilized among us will go back for it after clearing some real estate and eat it last, as Europeans do.)

The reality of dessert is that some folks only want another drink (hummingbirds after nectar!) and some will wait patiently for a solid confectionary to arrive. Eventually it does: The fermented berry juice that sat for days in my back pantry, growing fizzier and tarter and ever more purposeless, finally finds its calling in a pretty little ice cream float topped with a cap of home-

made marshmallow crème, its silvery pompadour like a space-age antidote to all of this garden goodness. Conveniently, because we're in the woodshop, a handy-dandy blowtorch sits by the stove, so I put it to use brûléeing the meringue float tops.

Hot and cold, fancy and gritty, airy and dense, sweet and tangy—all the contrasts that work in a successful desert work for a party, too. Polarity can be liberating; it creates some space into which the unexpected can flow.

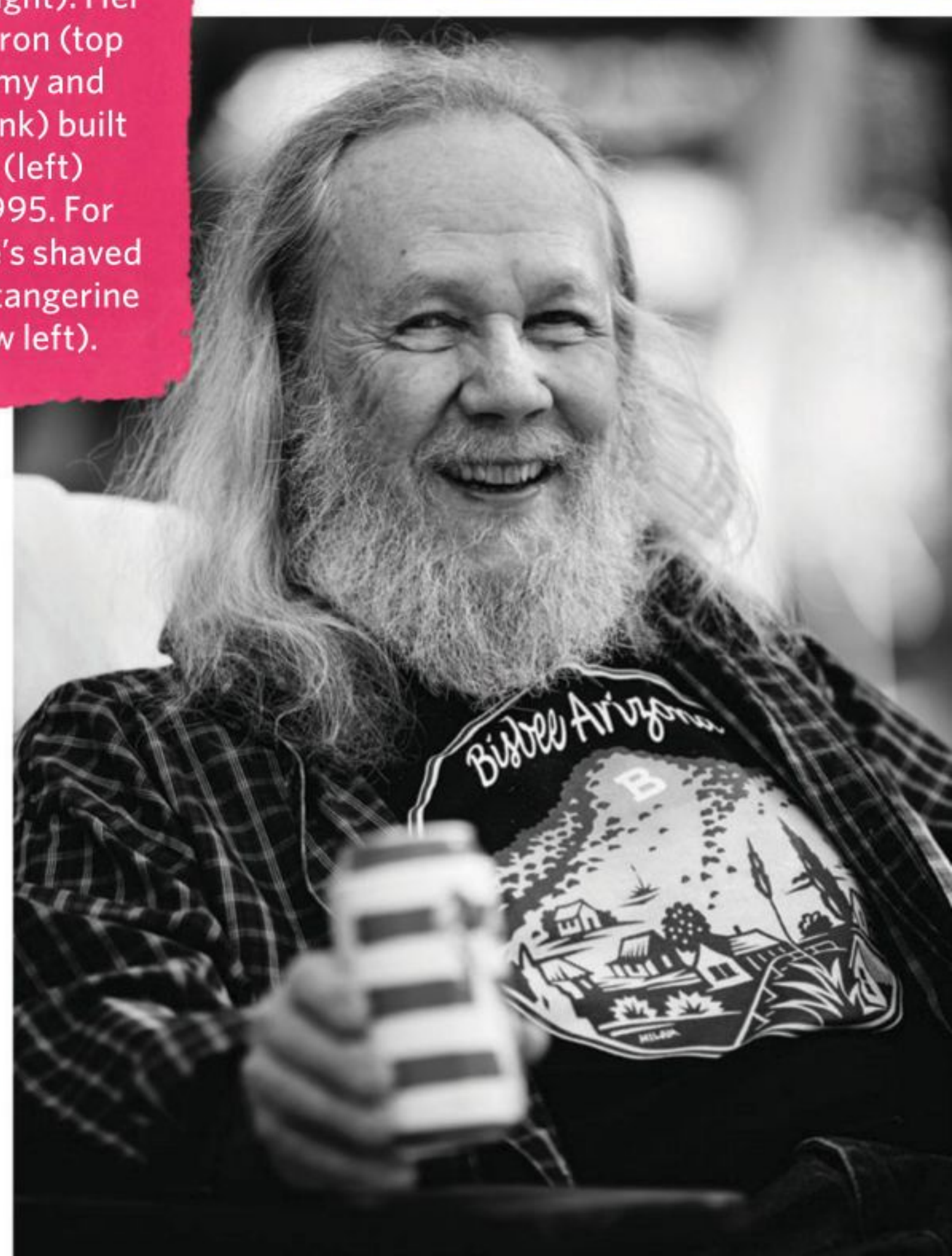
My restaurant professionalism is fading as quickly as the dawn stars in the sky. I am now a domesticated home cook. I have a designated "cracker bowl"; an appetizer means a hastily made dip that soon wears the tracks of a sledging hill; we always run out of wine glasses and have to use the jelly jars; and the kids are never quiet unless they're suspiciously quiet.

The garage party confirms the weird theory I lit on when I moved back home: The deeper you move into the country, the farther the party travels from the formal heart of the house. Fancy dining rooms give way to bright kitchens, and when you get to really rural areas such as ours, you find people accustomed to throwing parties in cement-floored shops and garages. Now that I've logged time here, I get it: When the meter dips to super-casual, the social-barometric pressure falls. It might seem like this kind of informality is one lazy lady's excuse, but I don't think so. When it comes to dinner parties, a lack of rules in an unconventional space feels rather electric.

And just when all this extreme informality begins to sound dangerously close to a set of commandments, remember that party rules work best when they are noted but then subversively trespassed—which also applies to the rules of English grammar. So iron your linen napkins if you must, but remember: Parties are fun, but parties in the garage are always *funner*.



Thielen serves shots of pickle brine in her grandmother's digestif glasses (top right). Her husband, Aaron (top left, with Amy and their son, Hank) built the house (left) himself in 1995. For dessert, there's shaved ice with sour tangerine curd (below left).



Spicy Pickle Brine Shots

Makes 8 shots; 📖 Page 44

Active: 5 min.; Total: 1 day

When buying pickles for the brine used in this recipe, avoid those made with garlic, as it will overpower the briny flavor and the chile in these shots. Try serrano, Thai, or habanero chiles in the brine for even more spice.

- 2 Fresno or red jalapeño chiles, halved lengthwise
- 1 cup dill pickle brine, from one 24-oz. jar
- 4 oz. chilled vodka

1 In a small bowl, submerge the chiles in the brine and cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate at least 24 hours or up to 1 week; the brine will get spicier the longer it sits.

2 To serve, pour 1 ounce of the spiced brine into each of 8 shot glasses and then top each with ½ ounce of vodka.

Smoky Baba Ghannouj with Oil-Cured Black Olives

Makes 3 cups; 📖 Page 50

Active: 45 min.; Total: 1 hr. 10 min.

Mayonnaise ensures a creamy, smooth texture in this Midwestern riff on the classic Mediterranean dip. Chopped cumin seeds add spice and a little crunch to the smoky eggplant.

- 2 medium eggplants (1 ¾ lbs.)
- ½ tsp. whole cumin seeds
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more to garnish
- 1 bunch radishes, trimmed
- 1 large kohlrabi, trimmed
- 3 Tbsp. mayonnaise, preferably homemade
- 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 2 tsp. kosher salt

- ¼ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- Pinch of cayenne
- Pinch of ground cinnamon
- 1 large garlic clove, finely grated
- ¼ cup oil-cured niçoise olives, pitted and roughly chopped
- Aleppo pepper, to garnish

1 Heat the broiler to high. Place the eggplants on a foil-lined baking sheet and broil, turning as needed, until blackened all over and very soft, 20 minutes. Transfer the baking sheet to a rack and let the eggplant cool for 10 minutes.

2 Meanwhile, place the cumin seeds on a cutting board and drizzle with two drops of olive oil. Chop the seeds repeatedly until coarsely ground. Using a mandoline or knife, thinly slice the radishes and kohlrabi and then place in a large bowl of ice water. Let sit until the slices begin to curl, about 10 minutes. Drain and spread the slices out on a towel to dry.

3 Peel and discard the charred eggplant skin and place the flesh on a cutting board. Finely chop the flesh and then scrape into a bowl. Stir in the chopped cumin along with the ¼ cup of olive oil, the mayonnaise, lemon juice, salt, pepper, cayenne, cinnamon, and garlic. Transfer the baba ghannouj to a serving bowl and drizzle with more olive oil. Sprinkle with the olives and Aleppo and serve with the radish and kohlrabi slices.

Shaved Ice with Cola Syrup and Tangerine Curd

Serves 8; 📖 Page 44

Active: 45 min.; Total: 5 hr.

Cocktail bitters and cinnamon transform cola into a dark root beer-like syrup for this refreshing dessert. Use any leftover tangerine curd as a spread on toast or filling for layer cakes.

- ¾ cup plus ⅓ cup sugar
- 5 egg yolks

- Kosher salt
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- ¼ cup fresh tangerine or orange juice
- 6 Tbsp. unsalted butter, cut into 12 cubes
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ cup Coca-Cola
- 1 Tbsp. cocktail bitters, such as Angostura
- ¾ tsp. ground cinnamon
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- Ice, for serving

1 For the tangerine curd: In a small saucepan, bring 1 inch of water to a simmer over medium heat. In a medium bowl, whisk the ¾ cup of sugar with the egg yolks and a pinch of salt until smooth. Stir in the lemon and tangerine juices and then place the bowl over the saucepan. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the curd is thickened and an instant-read thermometer inserted into the curd reads 180°, about 16 minutes.

2 Remove the bowl from the saucepan and stir in the butter, one cube at a time, allowing each cube to melt before adding another. Whisk in the olive oil and then place a sheet of plastic wrap on the surface of the curd. Refrigerate until chilled, at least 4 hours.

3 Meanwhile, make the cola syrup: In a small saucepan, stir the remaining ⅓ cup sugar with the cola, bitters, and ground and stick cinnamon. Bring to a simmer over medium heat and then cook, stirring, until slightly reduced and thickened, about 5 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and let the syrup cool to room temperature. Pour the syrup through a fine sieve into a small bowl and refrigerate until ready to use.

4 To serve, process ice in a blender until very finely crushed. For each serving, spoon about 3 tablespoons of the tangerine curd into the bottom of a glass and top with 1 cup of shaved ice. Drizzle with about 2 tablespoons of the cola syrup and serve immediately.



**After dinner,
people stand
around the wood
stove, idling
happily like bugs
around a light**



When not used by Thielen's sculptor husband, Aaron, the studio is a great entertaining space. It has a vintage woodburning stove (left) and a combination wood-and-electric stove (above), which Thielen uses to store barware. Aaron's carved woodblocks hang behind it.

Sour Raspberry Floats with Marshmallow Crème

Makes 8 floats; 📷 Page 38
Active: 40 min.; Total: 5 days

For the fermented juice in these floats, frozen raspberries work best because they're pasteurized, which will prevent any off-flavors or bacteria from occurring in the juice. The vinegar in the marshmallow crème adds a pleasant tanginess to cut its sweetness.

- 10 oz. frozen raspberries, thawed
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 2 cups fresh raspberries (8 oz.)
- 2 egg whites
- 1 Tbsp. white wine vinegar
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/4 tsp. cream of tartar
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- Vanilla ice cream, for serving

1 One week before you plan to serve the floats, make the sour raspberry juice: In a bowl, stir the thawed raspberries with 1/3 cup of the sugar and 2 cups boiling water until the sugar dissolves. Let stand until cooled to room temperature, about 30 minutes.

2 Pour the raspberries and liquid through a fine sieve set over a bowl and stir, without pressing the berries, until drained. Discard the spent raspberries or save for another use. Stir the lemon juice into the raspberry juice and cover with plastic wrap. Let stand at room temperature until fizzy and fermented, 5 days.

3 Uncover the raspberry juice and pour it through a fine sieve lined with cheesecloth into small pitcher. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until ready to use. In a separate bowl, toss the fresh raspberries with 3 tablespoons of the sugar and let stand, stirring occasionally, until the berries break down and the sugar dissolves, about 2 hours. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until ready to use.

4 Make the marshmallow crème: In a large metal bowl, whisk the remaining 1/2 cup sugar with the egg whites and then place the bowl over a pan of simmering water. Whisk the egg whites and sugar constantly until the sugar dissolves and the whites are hot to the touch, about 3 minutes; an instant-read thermometer inserted into the whites should read 140°. Remove the bowl from the pan and add the vinegar,

vanilla, cream of tartar, and salt. Using a hand mixer, whisk the whites and sugar until cool to the touch and stiff peaks form, 8 to 10 minutes.

5 To serve, fill eight 8-ounce jars or glasses halfway with ice cream and then spoon the macerated fresh raspberries over. Pour about 1/3 cup raspberry juice into each float and then cover with a large dollop of marshmallow crème. Serve immediately or use a kitchen torch to brown the top of the marshmallow crème.

Turnip Salad with Green Grape Vinaigrette

Serves 8; 📷 Page 40
Active: 1 hr. 10 min.; Total: 1 hr. 40 min.

Ideally, you want unripe green wine grapes for this recipe, but grocery store green grapes will also work. The caramel-coated pumpkin seeds lend a bittersweet crunch to the bright, crisp turnips and peppery arugula.

- 1 1/2 cups green grapes (9 oz.)
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 1/2 Tbsp. white wine vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp. minced tarragon
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tsp. butter, plus more for greasing
- 2/3 cup pumpkin seeds
- 1 1/2 Tbsp. sugar
- 2 lbs. turnips, peeled and julienned (6 cups)
- 4 cups packed baby arugula

1 Make the vinaigrette: In a 2-qt. saucepan, bring the grapes and 3/4 cup water to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium, cover, and cook until tender, 10 minutes. Uncover the grapes and smash with a potato masher or wooden spoon. Continue cooking the grapes over medium, stirring, until almost all the liquid evaporates and the grapes just begin to stick to the bottom of the pan, 30 minutes more.

2 Remove the pan from the heat and scrape the grapes into a fine sieve set over a bowl. Using a spoon, press the grapes through the sieve to yield a purée in the bowl; you should have about 1/4 cup. Whisk in the olive oil, vinegar, lemon juice, and tarragon until smooth and then season with salt and pepper.

3 Line a baking sheet with foil and grease lightly with butter. Heat a small skillet over medium. Add the pumpkin

seeds and cook, tossing, until lightly toasted, 3 minutes. Pour the seeds into a bowl and return the skillet to medium heat. Sprinkle the sugar into the skillet and cook, swirling the pan, until the sugar melts and turns amber in color, 3 minutes. Add the 1 teaspoon of butter and pumpkin seeds, season with salt and pepper, and stir quickly to coat. Pour the seeds out onto the prepared baking sheet and spread into an even layer. Let cool completely and then break into bite-size pieces.

4 In a large bowl filled with ice water, soak the julienned turnips for 15 minutes. Drain the turnips and blot dry with paper towels. Add the turnips to the bowl with the vinaigrette, along with the arugula, and season with salt and pepper. Toss until evenly coated and then arrange on a large serving platter. Sprinkle with the pumpkin seeds just before serving.

Polenta with Corn and Wild Rice

Serves 8 to 10; 📷 Page 41
Active: 20 min.; Total: 1 hr. 20 min.

Wild rice adds a toasted nuttiness to this dish, and breaking it up in a food processor allows the rice to cook at the same rate as the polenta. Be sure to scrape the corn cobs with the back of a knife after you grate the kernels to extract as much of the corn liquid as you can.

- 3 ears of corn, shucked
- 1/2 cup wild rice
- 4 cups whole milk
- 4 cups water
- 2 cups coarse polenta
- 2 tsp. kosher salt
- 3 Tbsp. unsalted butter, plus more for serving

1 Set a box grater over a large bowl and then grate the corn cobs on the large holes until you get a soupy purée; you should have 3/4 cup.

2 In a food processor, pulse the wild rice until coarsely cracked. Transfer to a fine sieve, rinse under cold running water until the water runs clear, and drain.

3 In a 4-qt. saucepan, bring the milk and water to a boil. Whisk in the wild rice, polenta, and salt and reduce the heat to medium-low. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the polenta and rice are tender, about 1 hour. Remove the polenta from the heat and stir in the grated corn purée and butter until smooth. Pour into a large serving bowl or platter and top with more pats of butter before serving.



Grilled Greens and Leek Tops with Chile-Garlic Sauce

Serves 6 to 8

Active: 35 min.; Total: 1 hr. 30 min.

When buying leeks for this dish, look for ones that have all or most of their dark green tops still attached. If trimmed leeks are all you can find, use the dark and light green parts only.

- 1 red bell pepper, halved lengthwise**
- 1 Fresno chile, halved lengthwise**
- 6 garlic cloves, unpeeled**
- 1/4 cup olive oil**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 1 tsp. honey**

- 6 large leeks**
- 1 bunch collard greens (12 oz.), stems removed and leaves torn into large pieces**

1 Heat the oven to 400°. On a foil-lined baking sheet, toss the bell pepper and chile halves with the garlic and 2 tablespoons of the olive oil. Season with salt and pepper, and bake until the chile and garlic are tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Using tongs, transfer the chile halves and garlic to a work surface. Flip the pepper halves and continue baking until tender, about 20 minutes. Transfer the peppers to a work surface and reserve the cooking oil; you should have about 1 tablespoon. Peel the peppers, chiles, and garlic, and purée in a blender with the reserved cooking oil, 1 tablespoon olive oil,

and the honey. Scrape the chile-garlic sauce into a bowl and season with salt and pepper.

2 Light a grill. Trim the leeks, reserving only the dark green tops and light green outer leaves. In a large bowl, toss the leeks with the collard greens and remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil, and season with salt and pepper. Arrange the leeks and collard greens on the grill and cook, turning once, until lightly charred, 8 to 10 minutes.

3 Turn the heat off on half the grill or remove the grill grate and rake the coals to one side. Pile the leeks and collard greens on the indirect side of the grill and close the lid. Let the greens steam until very tender, about 15 minutes. Spread the chile-garlic sauce on a large platter and then pile the greens on top.

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Buffet-friendly but full of competing personalities, these dishes mingle on the plate like old acquaintances

To serve with her Midwestern version of baba ghanouj (see page 45 for recipe), Thielen soaks sliced radishes in ice water, turning them into crisp, wavy-edged disks—"light ferries for the mayo-rich dip," she says.

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SLOW DOWN TO SEE THE WORLD

Guests claim their chairs around the fire after dinner. Bare trellises, made from peeled young spruce trees, frame the studio's doorway.



Slow-Roasted Pork Shoulder with Parsley Bagna Cauda

Serves 10 to 12; 📷 Page 40

Active: 40 min.; Total: 18 hr.

This hearty pork roast, rubbed with coriander, thyme, and allspice, gets a shot of brightness from a vinegary herb bagna cauda. Ask your butcher to leave $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of fat on top of the pork shoulder; it will baste the meat as it roasts.

For the roast pork:

- 1 Tbsp. whole coriander seeds
- 1 tsp. whole cumin seeds
- 1 Tbsp. dried thyme
- 2 tsp. sweet paprika
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. ground allspice
- One 7-lb. bone-in pork shoulder with $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch fat left on top
- 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the bagna cauda:

- 1 cup whole milk
- 12 garlic cloves, unpeeled
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup finely chopped flat-leaf parsley

- 2 oil-packed anchovy fillets
- Kosher salt
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 2 tsp. white wine vinegar

1 Make the spice rub: In a small skillet, heat the coriander and cumin seeds over medium, swirling the skillet, until toasted, 3 minutes. Transfer the seeds to a spice grinder and process until finely ground. Pour the spices into a bowl and stir in the dried thyme, paprika, and allspice.

2 Place the pork shoulder, fat side up, in a 9-x-13-inch baking dish and, using a paring knife, score the fat in a $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-deep crosshatch pattern. Rub the pork with the vegetable oil and then season liberally with salt and pepper. Sprinkle the spice rub on the pork and rub it all over until evenly coated. Cover the pork with plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 12 hours.

3 Heat the oven to 300°. Remove the plastic wrap and then tightly cover the pork shoulder with foil. Bake until the pork is very tender when pierced with a knife, about 4 to 5 hours.

4 Meanwhile, make the parsley bagna cauda: In a small saucepan, combine the milk and garlic, and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to maintain a simmer and cook until the garlic is tender when pierced with a knife, about 15 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and, using a slotted spoon, transfer the garlic to a work surface. Reserve the garlic-infused milk and peel the garlic.

5 With a mortar and pestle or food processor, mash the garlic cloves with the parsley, anchovies, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt until smooth. Stir in 1 tablespoon of the garlic milk, the olive oil, butter, lemon juice, and vinegar and then spoon the bagna cauda into a serving bowl.

6 When the pork is tender, remove it from the oven and increase the temperature to 425°. Remove the foil and drain off the pan juices into a bowl. Let the juices stand to separate, then skim off and discard the fat. Return the pork to the oven and roast until the pork turns dark golden brown and the top is crisp, 15 to 20 minutes. Pour the pan juices back into the baking dish, shred the pork with two forks, and serve with the parsley bagna cauda.



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A Gathering by the Sea

ON BUCOLIC **MARTHA'S VINEYARD**, CHRIS FISCHER PULLS TOGETHER A BEACHSIDE DINNER AS ONLY A 12TH-GENERATION ISLANDER CAN—CLAMS FROM A LOCAL POND, PEAK-SEASON PRODUCE FROM HIS FARM, AND FRIENDS HE'S KNOWN SINCE CHILDHOOD

By Sophie Brickman
Photographs by Elizabeth Cecil



“These drive me insane,” says Chris Fischer, a hardshell clam in hand. The chef, a Martha’s Vineyard native and 12th-generation islander, is standing under a low sky on a sliver of seaweed-strewn beach. “Insane in a good way.”

In one muscle-memory-honed move, he shucks, slurps, and swallows. After a pleased sigh, he tosses the shell onto the sand.

“My dad used to feed me these when I was in diapers,” he tells me. “It’s like I have a Pavlovian response to them or something.”

He reaches down into the half-bushel bucket he and his father have just filled from the cold, salty waters of Menemsha Pond, grabs another clam, and readies his pocketknife.

The Vineyard is an island, about 100 square miles, off the coast of Massachusetts, and a world away from my home in muggy Manhattan. I’d never been before, but everything I’d read about the place promised a weekend of summery perfection. Produce from local farmers so trusting they leave their stands unmanned, tin cans at the ready so people can pay on the honor system. Seafood that needs nothing but olive oil and salt as seasoning. Afternoons spent splashing around in hidden ponds at the end of wooded paths. Seer-sucker and madras prints optional.

The perfect place, in other words, to learn a little bit about laid-back cooking and entertaining, an ideal bastion of bucolic casualness.

That was the idea, anyway.

But my first day on the island, flying solo, felt like one big exercise in hooliganism: I kept coming up against NO TRESPASSING and PRIVATE signs, kept having to maneuver the car backward down sandy roads, one hand on the wheel, one hand raised in a sheepish wave. I needed a guide to the island, and Fischer, who traces his roots back to a 17th-century patriarch named Henry Luce (yes, one of *those* Luces), is an ideal candidate. He remembers when phone numbers on the island were only four numbers, not ten. “I went to kindergarten in a chicken coop,” he likes to say. When he invites me to tag along as he pulls together a beachside dinner for friends, I readily accept.

Our first day together begins at the Chilmark General Store, which has been the center of the blink-and-you’ll-

miss-it town of Chilmark for more than a century. A ruggedly handsome, salt-of-the-earth kind of guy, he’s wearing a ripped T-shirt and work boots, a five-o’clock shadow, and a thick layer of dirt under his fingernails. Born and raised a few miles away, he left to cook around the world—at Mario Batali’s Babbo in New York City,

Ruth Rodgers’ River Café in London, Alice Waters’ Sustainable Food Project in Rome—but returned to the island when his mother passed away, and eventually took over his grandfather’s five-acre Beetlebung Farm, named after a native tree, when Poppy passed away a few years later.

This summer, after a couple of years of juggling farming duties with running the local Beach Plum Inn restaurant, he’s turned his focus entirely to resurrecting the glory of Beetlebung, which has been in the family since 1961. On any given night, you might find him pulling up chive flowers here, lettuce there, improvising casual dishes to serve in the farm’s greenhouse for friends and farmers who work alongside him. The beachside get-together he’s throwing, he tells me, will be a little more formal, but not much.

We drive to Larsen’s Fish Market, a Menemsha mainstay run by the weather-beaten, no-nonsense Betsy Larsen, who’s known Fischer since he was born. The first order of business is to sit on the dock eating raw oysters and little-necks, and watch Bob, Betsy’s husband, unload that day’s lobster catch a few feet from the shop’s back door.

“You can see how fresh this food really is,” Fischer says, before putting in an order for fish for tomorrow.

En route to pick up some feta for a salad, we take a quick detour down a sandy road and pull up to Tea Lane Farm. Fischer wants to check on some piglets. A family friend, who rents the farmland from the Martha’s Vineyard Land Bank Commission, allows Fischer’s cousin, Josh Scott, to graze his cows, sheep, and pigs on her land. Fischer and I carefully step over the electrified fence to find Anya, one of Josh’s two enormous black sows, conked out in

(Clockwise from bottom left): Whether at Beetlebung Farm greenhouse dinners or beachside gatherings, Chris Fischer’s food, like his grilled shiitake mushrooms and warming miso-scallion soup, perfectly reflects the laid-back vibe of Martha’s Vineyard. There, boats haul in fresh fish daily and clams are eaten straight from the water. Recipes, including shaved fennel salad with grilled corn and creamy feta, start on page 59. Center: A fuzzy Vineyard resident.



the shade, snuffling her way through some porcine dream.

"Anya, where are your babies?" Fischer asks quietly, leaning down to rub her belly before gently probing to see if he can feel any piglets inside. She lets out a snort-sigh. No dice. A few yards away, the other sow guards her impossibly cute one-week-old piglets, tiny mouths turned up into wide smiles, all tottering around on tiny legs as if lacking knee joints.

Our final grocery stop is at Mermaid Farm and Dairy, producer of Fischer's favorite feta. Fischer pops into the small, unmanned hut at the front and returns with a farm-fresh coffee lassi from the fridge, depositing money in—*yes!*—a tin can before heading up toward the farm to drop off some angelica seeds he's brought back from a trip to Japan. Caitlin Jones, who owns the farm with her husband, is watering plants in her greenhouse while listening to a podcast on the Paleo lifestyle.

"There's so much sugar in that thing," she says, gesturing to the lassi. "I had a sign up there that said, 'If you want to eat a lot of sugar, that's your problem,' with a little border collie sitting on a fighter jet. But, I don't know, it's gone now." Her ten-year-old son, Kent, drives by on a small Kubota tractor, one arm slung over the wheel, a long piece of grass hanging out of his mouth. He and Fischer exchange nods.

A few hours later, we close out the day at Beetlebung Farm, where Fischer's love of the land started, where he and Poppy used to plant perfectly straight rows of asparagus together, to be eaten, as his grandmother preferred, cooked in butter and served on toast. Fischer shows me where this year's asparagus is, yanking up a stalk that's a few feet tall, then pulls what he calls the "paintbrush" off a nearby fennel plant, a little frond, and gives it to me. It's intensely sweet, almost saccharine, with a strong flavor of anise.

Sheep from a nearby pasture bleat to each other as the sun starts to set. Fischer's grandmother will turn 100 in two weeks and lives in a house on the farm's property where she once ran a beauty salon. I follow as Fischer heads over with a lobster he picked up from Larsen's flapping in his hand. She's set up in front of the TV watching the baseball game. As he goes to the stove, I wish her a happy birthday.

"Oh, I don't know anything about a birthday," she demurs. I catch Fischer grin as he dunks the lobster into a pot of water.

The next day breaks overcast and cool. Fischer meets me barefoot at Alley's General Store, where he hops in my car and directs me down a back road to the house of Olivia Pattison.

"Gathering is part of the meal," he says. "Whether grabbing things from the garden or hunting or fishing."

Or, in this case, pie pick-upping.

Pattison is a friend who used to make desserts for him at the Beach Plum Inn. Today she's made two pies, filled with ripe blackberries and blueberries, along with a few loaves of sourdough bread she's thrown in, just 'cause. It's barely 8:30 on a Saturday morning, but Fischer strides right into her house ("I'm comfortable going into different houses, borrowing this and that—it's just how I *(continued on page 64)*

"People on the island have been using these ingredients for years because they're available and fresh," says Fischer of the mussels and clams in his riff on a traditional beachside clambake (see page 59 for recipe).



Fischer's dishes fall together seemingly at random, then make utter sense. I watch and think, *Why don't I do that all the time?*



Clams and Mussels with Spicy Pork Sausage Broth

Serves 4

Total: 40 min.

Fischer's version of a traditional New England clambake is cooked here on a stovetop, no sand required. Use topneck or cherrystone clams because they are larger and have more liquor—the liquid inside clams and mussels—with which to flavor the broth.

- 1 lb. small new potatoes**
Kosher salt
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil**
- 1 medium yellow onion, roughly chopped**
- 8 oz. spicy pork sausage, casings removed**
- 2 lbs. topneck clams, scrubbed clean**
- 2 lbs. mussels, debearded and scrubbed clean**
- 3 cups loosely packed basil leaves (1½ oz.)**
Grilled or crusty bread, for serving

1 In a medium saucepan, cover the potatoes with water and season generously with salt. Bring to a boil and cook until potatoes are tender, 12 minutes. Drain in a colander and let cool.

2 In a large saucepan, heat the olive oil over medium-high. Add the onion and cook, stirring, until translucent, about 3 minutes. Increase the heat to high and add the pork sausage. Cook, stirring to break up the sausage, until lightly browned and no longer pink, about 3 minutes. Stir in the clams and 2 cups water, and then cover the pan. Cook until the clams are halfway cooked, about 3 minutes. Add the mussels along with the potatoes and stir until evenly combined. Cover the pan and cook until the clams and mussels open and the potatoes are warmed through, about 3 minutes more.

3 Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the basil leaves. Serve directly from the pan or spoon into bowls and serve with bread.

Miso Soup with Scallions and Shiso

Serves 4; 📷 Page 57

Active: 30 min.; Total: 40 min.

This clean-tasting, simple miso soup is made with dashi, a fish broth reinforced here with kombu and bonito flakes. Sipped from mugs in the cool summer evening hours, it makes the perfect starter to an al fresco dinner, or an easy portable soup for



The depth of flavor in Fischer's honey-and-soy-marinated fluke steaks and tomato salad (see page 61 for recipes) belies the dishes' simplicity; each calls for just a handful of ingredients.

a beach picnic. You can substitute any small, white-fleshed, mild fish for the sea bass.

- 1 whole sea bass ($\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 lb.), gutted, scaled, and rinsed clean
- One 2-oz. sheet kombu (amazon.com)
- 6 cups water
- 3 cups dried bonito flakes (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; amazon.com)
- 6 Tbsp. white miso
- Kosher salt
- 2 cups thinly sliced scallions
- Shiso blossoms, to garnish (optional)

1 In a medium saucepan, cover the bass and kombu with the water and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Cook the bass, skimming any foam that rises to the surface, until cooked through, about 10 minutes.

2 Using tongs, transfer the fish to a work surface and discard the kombu. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the bonito flakes. Let the broth stand for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, using a fork, flake the meat from the bass into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces, and discard the skin and bones.

3 Pour the broth through a fine sieve set over a bowl and discard the bonito flakes. In a small bowl, stir the miso with 1 cup of the warm broth until dissolved. Pour the miso back into the saucepan with the remaining broth. Season with salt and keep warm over medium-low heat.

4 To serve, divide the scallions and fish among serving bowls and ladle over the warm broth. Garnish with shiso blossoms, if using, and serve while hot.

Marinated Tomatoes with Mint

Serves 4 to 6; 📷 Page 60
Total: 40 min.

Tomatoes picked off the vine in the last days of summer often need nothing more than a sprinkle of salt. For a slightly—just slightly—more elaborate dish that showcases the sweet juices of summer tomatoes, Fischer dresses them with olive oil and vinegar, creating a vinaigrette seemingly out of nothing. The vinegar helps sweat out the tomato juice, which is then thickened by the oil. Use any color of heirloom or beefsteak tomatoes you like to create a beautiful presentation.

- 2 lbs. cherry tomatoes, preferably Sun Gold, halved
- $\frac{1}{2}$ medium red onion, thinly sliced lengthwise
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil
- 3 Tbsp. red wine vinegar
- Kosher salt

- 1 lb. red or yellow heirloom tomatoes, cored and sliced crosswise
- Freshly cracked black pepper
- 1 cup loosely packed mint leaves, torn into bite-size pieces
- Flaky sea salt

1 In a large bowl, toss the cherry tomatoes with the red onion, olive oil, and vinegar. Season with salt and let stand, stirring every 5 minutes, to marry flavors, about 20 minutes.

2 Arrange the heirloom tomato slices on a serving platter and then spoon the cherry tomatoes and dressing over the top. Season with pepper and sprinkle with the mint leaves and sea salt before serving.

Soy-and-Honey-Glazed Fluke Steaks

Serves 4; 📷 Page 60
Active: 30 min.; Total: 40 min.

Fischer fell in love with the simple, robust marinades common to many Japanese dishes after traveling to Japan for work. Here he marinates fluke steaks—have your butcher cut them for you, or substitute flounder or sea bass steaks—in a sticky mixture of soy sauce, mirin, and honey. If you prefer, broil them on a foil-lined baking sheet for the same amount of time as on the grill.

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup honey
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup mirin
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup soy sauce
- 4 5-oz. fluke steaks
- Kosher salt
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- Freshly cracked black pepper
- Finely grated zest from $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon

1 In a small saucepan, combine the honey, mirin, and soy sauce, and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Cook, stirring, until reduced by half, 10 minutes. Remove the glaze from the heat and let cool.

2 Place the fluke steaks on paper towels and pat dry. Season the flesh and skin with salt and let stand to come to room temperature, about 10 minutes.

3 Light a grill. In a large bowl, gently toss the steaks with the olive oil and two-thirds of the glaze until evenly coated. Grill for 3 minutes and then flip the steaks and continue cooking, brushing with the remaining glaze, until tender and caramelized at the edges, 2 to 3 minutes more.

4 Transfer the steaks to a serving platter, season with pepper, and sprinkle with the lemon zest before serving.

Travel Guide: MARTHA'S VINEYARD

GETTING THERE

You can reach the island by either water—ferries leave frequently from various locations on the Eastern seaboard—or air. *For more information, go to mvy.com, where you can also learn about the island's beaches, many of which are private or require parking permits.*

WHERE TO STAY

Lambert's Cove Inn

This charming inn, located on seven acres in West Tisbury, offers 15 cozy guest rooms and a 70-seat restaurant. A full cooked-to-order breakfast is included in the room price. 90 Manaquayak Road, West Tisbury; lambertscoveinn.com

Captain Flanders House

Located on 60 acres in the small town of Chilmark, the main farmhouse of this inn dates to the 1700s. Fresh bread, muffins, honey, and jams are part of the complimentary breakfast. 440 North Road, Chilmark; captainflandersinn.com

WHERE TO EAT

Larsen's Fish Market

This family-run operation boasts some of the freshest seafood on the island. For lunch, grab a dozen shucked oysters or a hot buttered lobster roll at the take-out window and eat outside on the docks, watching as various Larsens unload the day's catch. 56 Basin Road, Chilmark; larsensfishmarket.com

The Bite

If you love good, crispy fried seafood—and who doesn't?—head to this small take-out shack with picnic tables out back. Get there early, when the fryer first starts up and the lines are short, for a paper container stuffed with crisp, golden fried clams or shrimp. 29 Basin Road, Menemsha; 508-645-9239

7a Foods

Billing itself as a "farm-to-takeout" joint, this small shop sells one of the island's great breakfast sandwiches (add the bacon), along with a handful of lunch sandwiches, prepared foods, and baked goods. Most of the ingredients are sourced locally. 1045 State Road, West Tisbury; 7afoods.com

Grilled Shiitake Mushrooms with Chile and Thyme

Serves 4 to 6; 📷 Page 57

Total: 20 min.

Chef Chris Fischer likes to lay out these charred mushrooms at the start of a meal for snacking—they put cheese plates and crudités to shame. Tossing them with the marinade infuses them with deep flavor. Feel free to use portobello, cremini, or oyster mushrooms instead of the shiitakes here.

- 1 lb. shiitake mushrooms, stems removed
- ½ cup olive oil
- 3 Tbsp. thyme leaves
- 2 serrano chiles, stemmed and thinly sliced crosswise
- Kosher salt
- Lemon wedges, for serving
- Flaky sea salt

1 Light a grill. In a large bowl, toss the mushrooms with the olive oil, thyme, and chiles until evenly coated. Season with kosher salt and then remove the mushrooms from the oil. Grill the mushrooms, flipping once, until lightly charred and tender, about 3 minutes.

2 Return the mushrooms to the bowl of oil and chiles and toss again until evenly coated. Spread out the mushrooms on a serving platter with lemon wedges and sprinkle with sea salt before serving.

Shaved Fennel and Grilled Corn Salad

Serves 6 to 8; 📷 Page 57

Total: 30 min.

A base of crunchy, fresh fennel contrasts perfectly with grilled corn kernels and

crumbled feta cheese in this summer salad. If you don't have time to light up the grill for the corn in this recipe, simply sauté the cut kernels in a dry skillet until they're charred in spots to caramelize their outsides, mimicking the flavors of the grill.

- 1 ear of corn, shucked
- 2 large fennel bulbs, trimmed, fronds reserved
- 1 cup loosely packed mint leaves, torn by hand into bite-size pieces
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 4 oz. feta cheese

1 Light a grill and cook the corn, turning as needed, until tender and charred all over, about 14 minutes. Let cool and then cut the kernels from the cob.

2 Cut the fennel bulbs in half lengthwise and, using a mandolin or chef knife, thinly shave the fennel lengthwise. Transfer the fennel to a large bowl along with the mint leaves, olive oil, and lemon juice, and season with salt. Toss until evenly combined and then arrange on a serving platter. Season with pepper and then top the salad with the reserved corn, the feta, and fennel fronds.

Black and Blue Berry Pie

Serves 8 to 10; 📷 Page 63

Active: 30 min.; Total: 4 hr.

Inspired by his neighbor Olivia Pattison's recipe, Fischer uses tapioca in the filling of this pie because it thickens the juicy berry mixture without imparting its own flavor or becoming gummy. Minute tapioca pearls are easy to find in grocery stores, but if you like, substitute an equal amount of cornstarch.

- 2½ cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- ½ cup plus 2 Tbsp. sugar
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt
- 2 sticks chilled unsalted butter, cut into ½-inch cubes
- 4 cups blackberries (18 oz.)
- 2 cups blueberries (12 oz.)
- 3 Tbsp. minute tapioca pearls
- 1 egg, lightly beaten

1 For the dough: In the bowl of a food processor, combine the flour, 2 tablespoons sugar, 1 teaspoon salt, and the butter. Pulse until the butter forms pea-size crumbles. Pour in ¼ cup ice-cold water and pulse briefly until dough begins to clump. Scrape the dough onto a work surface, knead until it just comes together, and mold into a ball. Halve the dough and shape each half into a ½-inch-thick disk. Wrap each disk separately in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour.

2 For the filling: In a large bowl, toss the blackberries and blueberries with the remaining ½ cup sugar, ½ teaspoon salt and the tapioca pearls until evenly combined. Let stand for 20 minutes.

3 Heat the oven to 400°. On a lightly floured work surface, roll one dough disk into a 14-inch circle and fit it into a 10-inch glass pie dish. Stir the berries to redistribute the juices and the sugar, then scrape into the pie dish. Roll the second dough disk into a 12-inch circle and place over the berries. Trim, seal, and crimp the edges of the dough and cut four slits in the top. Brush the dough all over with the beaten egg.

4 Place the pie on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet and bake until the crust begins to turn light golden brown, 15 minutes. Reduce the oven temperature to 325° and continue baking until the berries are bubbling and the crust is golden brown, 45 minutes. Let the pie cool before serving.





This pie, bursting with sweet-tart blackberries and blueberries (see page 62 for recipe), perfectly rounds out a late summer al fresco feast.

(continued from page 58) grew up,” he states, as he does just this), where she’s frying up bacon for breakfast. He gives her dog a rough scratch behind the ear, then piles his baked loot into his arms and places it in the car. Then it’s down yet another bumpy road to yet another friend’s house, where he’s planned to prep for the party. It’s about a mile from there to Black Point Beach, another off-limits-unless-you-have-the-key (literally, there’s a gate and a key) beach, but one that, I’m unsurprised to learn, Fischer can get onto, no problem.

His roommate pulls up a truck, and the three of us heave a wooden table into its bed, then drive to the shore and lug it down a path lined with pink beach roses that dead-ends at the dunes. “There’s a lot of schlepping when you cook on the beach,” Fischer tells me, “but food always tastes better there.”

The beach is wide, deserted, abutting a reed-filled pond where, out of the corner of my eye, I catch a satiny otter slip into the water as we walk by. A little slice of Eden, right here in New England. The clouds have burned off—it looks like we’ll get a nice sunset tonight.

Back at the house, we can hear the low roar of the surf as Fischer gets organized. He’s learned different styles of entertaining from various mentors along the way.

“With Mario, it was all loud music, drinking, keep the party going,” he says. “Alice had great taste and was all about hospitality.”

While he can appreciate an elaborate tasting menu, his own approach is simple: “You can do all you want with ingredients, you can do all you want with technique, but you need to know your audience.”

His audience today—mostly close friends, many of whom he’s known since he was a child—wants the food that earned him a name on the island and beyond: unfutzed-with flavors, casually presented.

“One of the dishes I was most proud of at the Beach Plum last year was bonito,” he remembers, as he puts some potatoes on to boil for a seafood stew, which will feature the Memsha Pond clams we gathered earlier. “We tasted it before service, and it was such a perfect representation of the fish that we served pieces of the loin with nothing. Just slices of loin on a plate.” He starts unpacking produce and laying it out on the counter in neat piles, then adds: “The discipline, the restraint of leaving that extra stuff off? That’s key.”

I watch him slice fennel bulbs slowly to yield paper-thin slivers that will be tossed with grilled corn and some of Mermaid Farm’s feta cheese—white and creamy like whipped butter—and take the stems off shiitakes, which he’ll serve with a simple chile marinade for snacking. His tomato salad is little more than red onions and cherry tomatoes marinated in oil and vinegar, then laid on a bed of thick-cut heirloom

tomatoes with a little torn mint on top. Each thing I watch him put together, I think, *Aha, of course, I can do that, too.* And then: *Why don’t I do that all the time?*

The dishes fall together seemingly at random yet make utter sense. He tosses, tastes, rips, his hands coated in oil, the motions visceral and a bit prehistoric.

He likes the idea of giving people mugs of hot soup as they gather, so, in a nod to the time he recently spent in Japan, he simmers kombu and bass in a pot to create a kind of Yankee dashi, to which he adds miso paste and scallions. He pulls together a simple marinade—just soy sauce, mirin, and honey—for fluke steaks, which he’ll grill down on the beach. I feel a little pang when he throws our clams into the pot with the potatoes—I’d had a raw one down on the beach, an ice-cold shot of brine that woke me up better

than an espresso. But I figure: Man tamed fire, might as well use it. Particularly if there’s going to be grilled fresh bread for dunking.

We chat and prep for a couple of hours, and before I know it, it’s dinnertime. No formal recipes, no timers, no real plan—the way I’d kill to be able to cook.

Down at the beach, it’s somehow all come together. His friends have laid out a tablecloth, silverware has materialized, there’s a cooler packed with ice-cold vinho verde, even a fire pit. Folks I’ve met over the past few days are there, and it seems only natural to exchange hugs.

Fischer has forgotten a ladle, so he uses a metal cup to portion out the soup, which everyone sips down, murmuring happily. Then they sit and help themselves to salads, just-off-the-grates fluke that has crisped on the edges, and heaps of clam and mussel stew.

“Chris, man, this food,” Tom Lesser, Fischer’s former neighbor, manages before simply laughing and turning his attention back to the plate. As I pick the meat out of a steamed clam, it’s hard to imagine the food tasting better than it does right here, on this beach, with hazy light settling over us and the surf crashing a few yards away.

Fischer sits down with his friends and eats the fluke with his hands. There’s just enough time for pie before the sun sinks and the wind kicks up. And then, just as easily as it all came together, it disbands. Without being asked, as if they did this every night, each person picks up something—a bowl, a glass, a bench, a pot, a couple of folks to the table—and transports it to the parking lot, where it’ll all be schlepped back home in the truck. Then everyone gets into cars and retreats through the maze of private bumpy back roads, dispersing in the dusk across the island, another Vineyard evening come to a close.

**The beach is
wide, deserted,
abutting a
reed-filled pond
where, out of
the corner of
my eye, I catch a
satiny otter slip
into the water
as we walk by.
A little slice
of Eden, right
here in New
England**



"There are two ways to entertain," says Fischer, "controlling every element, or being very organic." Here, organic entertaining gets a side of vinho verde and sun-dappled perfection.

The Sunday Suppers Project

CHEF MAGNUS NILSSON OF RESTAURANT FÄVIKEN SPENT THREE YEARS COLLECTING NEARLY A THOUSAND CLASSIC NORDIC RECIPES FOR A MASSIVE COOKBOOK. EVERY WEEKEND, AT HIS HOME IN JÄRPEN, SWEDEN, HE SHARES HIS RESEARCH WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Story and photographs by Magnus Nilsson



A man with long blonde hair, wearing a white apron over a dark t-shirt, is standing in a kitchen. He is looking down at a large stainless steel pot on a wooden table, which is covered with various ingredients including a whole fish on a wooden board, eggs, lemons, and jars. The kitchen has white cabinets, a dark wall, and two large pendant lamps hanging over the table. A window on the right side of the frame shows a view of the outdoors.

Chef Magnus Nilsson (right) gets a little help from his friend, and Fäviken head chef, Jesper Karlsson, before a Sunday supper at home.

The sounds in the kitchen this morning are few. The kids are playing in the garden, and the current moment of calm contrasts brightly with the bustle of moments ago, when we were having Sunday breakfast. The only sounds now are those of whey dripping out of a batch of skyr hanging in a muslin-lined colander placed over a pot, and that of Jesper, the head chef from my restaurant, Fäviken, peeling carrots over the sink.

For almost three years now I have been working on a book about the culture and traditions of eating in all the Nordic countries. I have been traveling: meeting, interviewing, and eating with people in their homes, photographing and photocopying recipes, sniffing around the gastro-cultural underbrush, looking to capture the tastes of a region encompassing more than a million square miles. The amount of material collected has been huge, and because of that I have been working

almost every Sunday, testing recipes in my kitchen all day and hosting friends and family for dinner with the results in the evenings. Today marks the end of recipe testing, as my book is almost on its way to the printer.

We are preparing bleak roe in a classic Baltic way along with a Finnish recipe for pike-perch with horseradish butter, known as *kuhaa Mannerheimin tapaan*. It's named for Marshal Carl Mannerheim, a Finnish military hero often referred to as the father of modern Finland and apparently also the father of quite a few classic Finnish dishes. We are cooking two Icelandic recipes: slow-roasted leg of lamb and skyr, the cultured Icelandic fresh cheese. There will be some fried pickled herring, which I remember my grandmother often making in the summer—it's already marinating in a glass jar in the fridge. We'll close with a particular kind of gooey Swedish chocolate cake called *kladdkaka*—it

speckled eggs of sea-loving guillemots, birds that nest in cliffs overlooking the ocean. His family has held the rights to collect eggs on those particular cliffs for 17 generations. After some pleasantries, the egg collector invited me into his pickup truck for an impromptu lunch. Damp, foggy, north Atlantic air mingled with our warm exhalation in the enclosed space, and the windows quickly fogged up, little beads of water rolling down. We each peeled a fist-size, almost conically shaped, bright turquoise egg and ate it just like that, with some salt. Perfectly cooked and simply served by a stranger in the seat of a battered pickup truck in the Icelandic countryside—this was my best meal of the year, because someone really wanted to show me something. He took genuine care cooking and sharing that egg with me, even though I was a stranger.

We tend to forget that the essence of hospitality is looking after the well-

Pike-perch with Creamed Mushrooms and Horseradish Butter

Serves 4; 📷 Page 69

Total: 45 min.

In Sweden, Nilsson uses pike-perch, a distinct fish that's neither pike nor perch but is similar in size and taste to American walleye. If you can't find either, red snapper or any firm, white-flesh fish with moderately sized fillets will work.

- 2 sticks plus 4 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 3/4 lbs. cremini mushrooms, halved
- Kosher salt
- Ground white pepper
- 2 Tbsp. heavy cream
- One 4-oz. piece fresh horseradish, peeled and finely grated (or 1/2 cup prepared horseradish)
- 1 1/4 lbs. skin-on pike-perch or walleye fillets
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup plain bread crumbs
- 2 Tbsp. roughly chopped flat-leaf parsley

1 In a large skillet, heat 2 tablespoons of the butter over high. When the butter just melts, add the mushrooms and cook, undisturbed, for 4 minutes. Continue cooking the mushrooms, stirring occasionally, until lightly browned and all their liquid evaporates, about 4 minutes more. Season the mushrooms with salt and white pepper, and then stir in 2 tablespoons of the butter and the cream. Remove the pan from the heat and keep warm.

2 In a small saucepan, melt 1 stick of the butter over medium heat, and then stir in the horseradish. Cover the pan and turn off the heat. Let the horseradish butter stand for 10 minutes as you cook the fish.

3 In another large skillet, heat the remaining 1 stick of butter over medium-high until it begins to brown. Season the fillets with salt and black pepper, and then sprinkle with the bread crumbs until evenly coated on all sides. Working in batches, add the fillets to the skillet, skin side down, and cook, turning once, until golden brown and cooked through, about 5 minutes. Transfer the fillets to paper towels to drain.

4 Spoon the mushrooms onto a larger serving platter and sprinkle with the parsley. Arrange the fillets, skin side up, over the mushrooms and then spoon over the warm horseradish butter and serve immediately.

Every meal is a chance to entertain, even when it's just family

translates, simply, to “gooey cake”—which has become something of a staple in the Nilsson home. A relatively recent addition to Swedish cake culture, first appearing in the mid-'70s, it has exploded to national prominence and is now the most common search word on Swedish recipe websites.

The Icelandic recipes are less familiar to me. I have eaten skyr many times but never prepared it myself. The lamb would have traditionally been cooked in a fire pit in some Icelandic backyard; we're using the oven instead. (I'd rather let my children play in the garden than dig a giant hole in it and risk a fire.)

As I rub coarse salt and herbs into a leg of lamb, I think about all the great meals I've had since I started this project. Some of the best are those that weren't planned at all. Like the time in northern Iceland when I met a former air force meteorologist who makes his living collecting the

being of others, whether offering a new acquaintance a bit of your lunch or cooking an elaborate meal for a crowd. True, tonight I will be treating my family—it's just us this time—to a dinner of scraps from a photo shoot, but every meal is a chance to entertain, an idea that often gets lost in the planning, preparation, execution, and excitement.

The food from today's testing turns out well, especially the pike-perch—I am surprised by the intense sweetness of the horseradish when it is cooked for a bit in butter. The plate of chocolate cake marks the end of the final tasting session, the end of three fantastic years learning so much about a food culture I thought I already understood, the end of three years sharing all I found with friends and family over the dinner table. I take a final bite of cake, a sweet ending to my Sundays of work.

Magnus Nilsson's The Nordic Cookbook (Phaidon) will be released in October.



In this traditional Finnish dish, horseradish, cooked briefly in butter, takes on a sweet, nutty taste that pairs perfectly with mild pike-perch, breaded and crisped until brown (see page 68 for recipe).



Clockwise from bottom left: Nilsson prepares a leg of lamb for dinner, which he'll serve later that evening—along with fried pickled herring and a gooey chocolate cake—to some of his harshest critics, his children Ella, 5, and Arne, 7. See page 71 for recipes.

Fried Herring in Pickling Liquor

Serves 8 to 10; 📖 Page 70
Total: 35 min. plus overnight

The herring in this recipe are “floundered,” a traditional Scandinavian preparation in which the herring sides are removed from the carcass but left attached by the skin over the backbone, forming one large fillet. Ask your fish monger to do this for you, or buy individual fillets and tie two together with kitchen twine for each “floundered” fillet.

- 8 whole herring, small trout, or bluefish, floundered (see note above)
- Kosher salt
- Ground white pepper
- 1/3 cup Dijon mustard
- 2 Tbsp. minced dill
- 2 Tbsp. minced flat-leaf parsley
- 8 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 1/2 cups distilled white vinegar
- 1 medium red onion, thinly sliced crosswise
- 1 large carrot, thinly sliced crosswise
- 10 whole allspice berries
- 10 whole black peppercorns
- 5 whole white peppercorns
- 2 bay leaves
- Boiled potatoes and rye toast, for serving

1 Place the herring on a work surface and open each like a book so the flesh is facing up. Season the flesh side of the fillets with salt and white pepper, and then brush each with the mustard. Sprinkle the fillets with the dill and parsley, and then close each like a book, so the flesh sides are touching.

2 In a large nonstick skillet, heat the butter over medium. Working in batches, add the fillets and cook, turning once, until the skin sides are lightly browned, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer the fillets to paper towels to drain, and then arrange them in a baking dish large enough to fit them in a single layer.

3 Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan, bring the sugar and 1 1/2 cups water to a boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the vinegar, onion, carrot, allspice, black and white peppercorns, and bay leaves. Gently pour the pickling liquid and aromatics over the fillets and let cool to room temperature. Cover the dish with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 12 hours. To serve, drain the fillets and serve with some of the pickling liquid and aromatics alongside boiled potatoes and rye toast.

Roast Leg of Lamb with Herbs and Kale

Serves 8; 📖 Page 70
Active: 25 min.; Total: 6 hr.

The dramatic presentation of a whole leg of lamb is the most fun part about roasting one. Have your butcher clean the protruding bone well and leave about 1/4 inch of fat on the outside of the meat. The kale here is simple, but it helps balance the lamb’s meaty, assertive flavor with a bright vinegar dressing. Chef Magnus Nilsson also likes to serve this lamb with a dollop of skyr (see recipe, below right) mixed with herbs.

- One 12-lb. leg of lamb, trimmed
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 4 rosemary sprigs
- 4 thyme sprigs
- 2 sage sprigs
- 1 1/2 bunches (20 oz.) curly kale, stems removed, leaves torn
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 2 Tbsp. distilled white vinegar

1 Heat the oven to 300°. In a large roasting pan, arrange the leg of lamb fat side up. Using a knife, score the fat in a crosshatch pattern, spacing the cuts 1/2 inch apart. Season the lamb liberally with salt and pepper, and then rub with the olive oil, rosemary, thyme, and sage. Cover the roasting pan with foil and bake the lamb until very tender, 4 1/2 to 5 hours.

2 Remove the roasting pan from the oven and discard the foil. Heat the broiler, and then return the lamb to the oven and broil until the top is golden brown and crisp, 5 to 6 minutes. Transfer the lamb to a rack and let stand for 10 minutes.

3 Meanwhile, in a large bowl, toss the kale with the vegetable oil, vinegar, and 1 teaspoon salt, and let stand for 5 minutes to soften. Carve or shred the lamb and serve from the roasting pan with the kale and skyr (see recipe at right).

Swedish “Goosey” Chocolate Cake

Serves 8; 📖 Page 70
Active: 15 min.; Total: 1 1/2 hr.

Nilsson’s wife likes to serve this beloved Swedish cake, similar to a fudgy American brownie, chilled, but it’s just as good piping hot from the pan with a scoop of ice cream. Melting the butter in this recipe first and then stirring it with the other ingredients helps ensure that as little air

as possible gets incorporated into the batter. The result: a gooey, more moist cake.

- 10 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted and cooled, plus more for greasing
- 1/4 cup plain bread crumbs
- 1 cup sugar
- 7 Tbsp. natural cocoa powder
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup cake flour, sifted
- Whipped cream, for serving

1 Heat the oven to 400°. Grease a 9-inch springform pan with butter and coat the bottom and sides with the bread crumbs, discarding any excess. In a medium bowl, whisk the 10 tablespoons melted butter with the sugar, cocoa powder, vanilla, and salt until well combined. Add the eggs one at a time and whisk until smooth. Fold the flour into the batter until just combined, and then scrape the batter into the prepared pan, smoothing the top.

2 Bake until the cake forms a thin skin on top but the batter is still loose in the center, about 10 minutes. Transfer the pan to a rack, let cool completely, and then chill for 1 hour. Unmold the cake and serve.

Skyr with Parsley and Dill

While you can buy skyr, Icelandic fresh cheese similar in texture to yogurt, you can control its taste, quality, and texture if you make it at home. As with homemade yogurt, you’ll need to buy a small amount to get started. In a 6-qt. saucepan, heat 5 1/4 cups skim milk over medium and attach a candy thermometer to the pan. Cook the milk until it reaches 175°. Reduce the heat to low and maintain the temperature for 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and let stand until the milk cools to 98.6°, about 45 minutes. Whisk in 1 Tbsp. store-bought skyr and 1 tsp. liquid rennet (amazon.com); then cover and place the pan in a cold oven. Let the milk stand, undisturbed, for 3 hours. Uncover and, using a knife, cut the curd into 6 to 8 large pieces. Cover the pan and return it to the oven; let stand for 3 hours more. Transfer the pan to the refrigerator to chill at least 12 hours. Using a ladle, scoop the curds into a cheesecloth-lined strainer set over a bowl and cover with plastic wrap; discard the whey. Let the curds drain in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 days (the longer it sits, the thicker the finished skyr will be). When ready to serve, scrape the drained curds into a bowl, and stir in 1 Tbsp. each minced parsley and dill, or sweeten with sugar and serve with fruit. Makes 3/4 cup.





A casual Egyptian lunch includes a mix of traditional and modern dishes: veal *b'stilla* (top left), a purslane and edible flower salad (top right), carrot and beet tahini dips (top and bottom), and barley with roasted vegetables (center). Recipes start on page 76. Opposite: Afternoon reflections in the author's pool, with the local pyramids as backdrop.

Lunch at the Desert's Edge

ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF CAIRO, A COOKBOOK AUTHOR AND RESTAURATEUR PUTS HER OWN SPIN ON THE LONG, LEISURELY MEALS OF HER CHILDHOOD

By Suzanne Zeidy Photographs by Helen Cathcart







Lunch here in Egypt is a big deal. Bigger, indeed, than dinner, which is typically just some meze (finger foods) and drinks. On Fridays, especially, the beginning of the Islamic Sabbath, we bring out our nice china and cook a lunchtime feast. Making more food than your guests can possibly eat is the Egyptian way.

That's why I've gathered family and friends for lunch on a hot day at my house in Abusir, a town just south of Cairo. We've been cooking for hours. The night before, I made mango sorbet spiced with anise, cardamom, and clove, and baked pistachio tuiles to serve with it. It's a more stylish way of using the country's fine mangoes—we have more than 20 varieties—which are usually served simply sliced for dessert. My own version of the rotisserie chicken you find at Cairo's street stalls has been slowly rotating over a fire. I've flavored them with herbs and slipped sumac and lemon zest under their skins to make them a little more special.

The queen of lunch when I was growing up was my Aunt Abba. Every Friday in the late afternoon, a roving cast of 20 or so friends and family, including my father, my older brother Helmy, and me, would start trickling into her apartment in Cairo. Abba was known for tradi-

tional dishes like *mahshi kronb*, cabbage leaves stuffed with rice; *mulukhiyyah*, a gelatinous soup made with bitter greens; a big turkey; roasted beef; and rice, of course. She was an extraordinary hostess, but she wasn't alone; in Egypt, where there hasn't been much of a restaurant scene, social activity and good meals are found mostly in people's homes.

My family has since moved out of Cairo's city center, which has become more cramped than it was when I was young and could ride a bicycle through the streets. My father lives near me in Abusir; my brother and his wife are next door, and we share a garden where we have the space for a domed outdoor clay oven that we use for baking *aish baladi*. It's one of the few strictly traditional items I make. *Balad* means "my country" in Arabic, and these whole-wheat flatbreads are sold on every corner in Cairo and eaten at every meal. I also like to serve another traditional dish, a simple salad made of purslane—the lemony succulent grows like a weed in Egypt, so much so that it's not sold in stores. I toss it with fresh herbs, walnuts, goat cheese, and a balsamic-mustard dressing perked up with horseradish.

When my dad hosted the big Friday lunch, he liked to experiment: He would play around with the fillings of *b'stilla*, a poultry pie that probably originated in Morocco but is now found all over the Middle East. In Morocco, the pie is made with layers of *warqa*, an ultrathin pastry, but here in Egypt, we use the slightly thicker phyllo dough. Dad would add ginger to the chicken filling for an Asian twist, or replace the poultry altogether with spicy beef and chiles. Today, he helps me make one of his favorite creative versions of *b'stilla*, with a spiced mixture of braised veal and pearl onions between flaky layers of phyllo. As the sun burns bright in the sky, we pass it around the table along with the salads, roasted chickens, and colorful tahini dips—my riffs on the classic sesame and garlic spread modernized with beet, carrot, and parsley to bright effect.

Pistachio tuiles accompany spiced mango sorbet (see page 78 for recipe). Opposite: Zeidy and her friends and family gather in her sunlit dining room (top); bakers Aziza and Sabah make *aish baladi* in the author's traditional clay oven (left); Zeidy's house and her brother's place share a backyard and date palms (right).

From my house, you can see the town's 4,000-year-old pyramids in the distance. When you think of Egypt, you might think of the iconic pyramids in Giza, but there are more than 80 of them spread throughout the country. Some people think the ones in Abusir look like rubble, but I see something more uplifting. When I look at them I remember what my brother once said when we were staying at home during a time of unrest. "These pyramids have seen so much change. Time just goes on and on." In our lifetime, the food and backdrop of our Friday luncheons have changed, and will probably change again when our children and grandchildren start hosting them, but the profound pleasure of making a meal with your own hands is eternal.

Suzanne Zeidy is the co-owner of street-food-inspired restaurants in Egypt. They share the same name as her latest cookbook, Cairo Kitchen (Hardie Grant Books, 2015).

The hostess and her guests take refuge from the hot Egyptian sun at the pool bar underneath a slatted roof.



Purslane and Herb Salad

Serves 8; 📷 Page 72
Total: 15 min.

Purslane, a sour-tasting green, forms the backbone of this refreshing herb salad, but watercress can be used in its place.

- 4 cups packed purslane
- 4 cups packed arugula
- 2 cups packed cilantro
- 2 cups packed flat-leaf parsley
- 1 cup packed salad sprouts
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup walnut oil
- 2/3 cup white balsamic vinegar
- 2 tsp. freshly grated horseradish
- 2 tsp. whole grain mustard
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 6 oz. goat cheese, crumbled
- 1 1/2 cups walnuts, roughly chopped
- Edible flowers, to garnish (optional)

In a large bowl, toss the purslane with the arugula, cilantro, parsley, and sprouts. In a small bowl, whisk both oils with the vinegar, horseradish, and mustard until smooth. Pour the dressing over the salad, season with salt and pepper, and toss to combine. Crumble the goat cheese over the salad and sprinkle with walnuts and edible flowers, if using, before serving.

Veal and Pearl Onion B'stilla

Serves 8; 📷 Page 72
Active: 30 min.; Total: 3 hr.

B'stilla, a North African meat pie, is traditionally made with poultry. Suzanne Zeidy's take includes veal and caramelized pearl onions. When ordering the veal for this recipe, have your butcher remove the bone.

- 10 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 lb. pearl onions, peeled
- One 2 3/4-lb. veal shank, deboned and cut into 2-inch cubes
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tsp. ground allspice
- 1 tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 serrano chile, stemmed, seeded, and finely chopped
- 4 cups veal or chicken stock
- 16 sheets phyllo dough (8 oz.)

1 In a large heavy-bottomed saucepan, heat 2 tablespoons of the butter and the olive oil over medium. Add the onions and cook, stirring, until caramelized, 10 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the onions to a bowl and increase the heat to medium-high. Season the veal with salt and pepper and then add to the pot. Cook, turning, until browned on all sides, 12 minutes.

2 Stir in the allspice, nutmeg, and chile, and cook, stirring, until fragrant, 1 minute. Return the onions to the pot along with the stock and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and cook, stirring occasionally, until the veal is tender, about 1 hour, 15 minutes. Remove from the heat and let cool. Roughly shred meat.

3 Heat the oven to 350°. Brush the inside of a 9-inch springform pan with some of the remaining 8 tablespoons butter. Line the bottom of the pan with 1 phyllo sheet, letting the excess hang over the sides, and then brush with melted butter. Repeat layering with 7 more phyllo sheets, brushing butter in between each layer and rotating the sheets one-quarter turn with each layer so they overlap in the pan.

4 Scrape the veal and onions into the pan and spread into an even layer. Fold the overhanging phyllo dough back over the veal and brush with more butter. Repeat

layering the remaining 8 phyllo sheets on top of the filling, brushing butter in between each, and rotating the sheets 90 degrees with each layer so they overlap. Tuck the edges of the phyllo into the sides of the pan, and brush the top of the pie with butter.

5 Bake the b'stilla until golden brown, about 40 minutes. Transfer the b'stilla to a rack and let cool before serving.

Grilled Vegetable and Barley Salad

Serves 8; 📷 Page 72
Active: 40 min.; Total: 2 1/2 hr.

Barley is typically eaten in a pudding for breakfast or dessert in Egypt, but here it's turned into a hearty salad, seasoned with cumin and chiles, and tossed with grilled vegetables, feta, and pistachios.

- 2 1/4 cups pearl barley
- 2 large zucchini, cut lengthwise into 1/2-inch-thick slices
- 1 medium eggplant, cut crosswise into 1/2-inch-thick slices
- 2 red bell peppers, stemmed, seeded, and halved
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1/2 tsp. ground coriander
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 oz. feta cheese, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1 cup loosely packed arugula
- 1 cup loosely packed cilantro, roughly chopped
- 1 cup loosely packed flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped
- 1/4 cup pistachios
- 4 scallions, thinly sliced
- 1 long red chile, stemmed, seeded, and finely chopped

1 In a large bowl, soak the barley in water for 1 hour and then drain. Meanwhile, light a grill. Brush the zucchini, eggplant, and peppers with 1/4 cup of the olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Grill the vegetables, turning, until tender and charred, 10 minutes. Transfer to a board and cut into 1/2-inch pieces.

2 Bring a medium saucepan of salted water to a boil and add the barley. Reduce the heat to medium and cook until tender, 45 minutes. Drain the barley and let cool.

3 In a large bowl, whisk the remaining 1/4 cup olive oil with the lemon juice, cumin, coriander, and garlic, and then stir in the cooked barley, season with salt and pepper, and transfer (continued on page 78)



A Trio of Tahini Dips

Serve these dips with aish baladi (see page 82 for recipe) or pita. Makes 2 1/2 cups each.

Beet Dip

Bring a medium saucepan of water to a boil. Add 1 lb. beets, trimmed, and cook until tender, about 1 hour. Drain and peel the beets, then transfer to a blender along with 1/2 cup tahini, 3 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice, 2 garlic cloves, and 3 ice cubes. Season with salt and pepper and purée until smooth. Spoon into a bowl and garnish with a drizzle of olive oil and 1 Tbsp. toasted pine nuts.

Carrot Dip

Bring a medium saucepan of water to a boil. Add 1 lb. carrots, peeled and halved crosswise, and cook until tender, about 10 minutes. Drain and transfer the carrots to a blender along with 1/2 cup tahini, 3 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice, 2 garlic cloves, and 3 ice cubes. Season with salt and pepper and purée until smooth. Spoon into a bowl and garnish with a drizzle of olive oil, 1 Tbsp. toasted, chopped walnuts, and 1 Tbsp. pomegranate seeds.

Parsley Dip

Bring a small saucepan of water to a boil. Add 2 1/2 cups parsley leaves and cook until bright green, 20 seconds. Drain the parsley and submerge in ice water. Drain and transfer to a blender along with 1 1/4 cups tahini, 7 1/2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice, 5 garlic cloves, and 3 ice cubes. Season with salt and pepper and purée until smooth. Spoon into a bowl and garnish with a drizzle of olive oil and more parsley leaves.



Sumac, fresh herbs, and an overnight brine bring a burst of flavor to this take on the rotisserie chickens found in Cairo's street markets.

(continued from page 76) to a serving platter. Arrange the zucchini, eggplant, and peppers with the feta, arugula, cilantro, pistachios, scallions, and chile over the barley to serve.

Sumac Roast Chicken with Lemon and Garlic

Serves 4

Active: 35 min.; Total: 2 hr. plus 1 day

Egyptians love tart flavors like the bracing, floral herb sumac, which is rubbed all over this juicy chicken. Zeidy cooks it in a rotisserie, although an oven yields equally delicious results.

- 1/2 cup kosher salt, plus more**
- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 2 Tbsp. whole black peppercorns**
- 10 rosemary sprigs**
- 10 thyme sprigs**
- 2 whole heads of garlic plus 5 garlic cloves (4 crushed, 1 minced)**
- 4 lemons, thinly sliced**
- 1 whole chicken (3 to 4 lbs.)**
- 2 Tbsp. sumac**
- Finely grated zest of 1 lemon**
- Freshly ground black pepper**
- 4 Tbsp. olive oil**

1 For the brine: Bring 4 cups water to a boil in a medium saucepan. Remove from the heat and stir in the salt, sugar, peppercorns, 5 rosemary sprigs, 5 thyme sprigs, the crushed garlic, and three-quarters of the lemon slices until the sugar and salt dissolve. Pour the brine into a large bowl and stir in 8 cups cold water. Submerge the chicken in the brine,

cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 24 hours.

2 In a small bowl, combine the sumac with the lemon zest. Drain the chicken, discard brine, and pat dry with paper towels. Using your fingers, gently separate the skin over the chicken breasts and thighs and stuff the sumac and lemon zest between the skin and meat. Season with salt and pepper.

3 Heat the oven to 400°. Drizzle the 2 heads of garlic with 1 tablespoon of the oil, and then wrap them in foil. In a medium bowl, toss the remaining rosemary and thyme sprigs with the minced garlic, remaining lemon slices, and 3 tablespoons olive oil. Rub the outside of the chicken with the oil, and stuff the cavity with the herbs and lemons. Transfer the chicken to a roasting pan with the heads of garlic, and roast until golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thigh reads 160°, about 1 hour and 10 minutes.

4 Transfer the chicken to a cutting board and let stand for 10 minutes. Unwrap the garlic heads, cut in half crosswise, and squeeze the cloves into the roasting pan. Whisk the garlic with the pan juices, scrape into a bowl, and serve the sauce alongside the chicken.

Spiced Mango Sorbet with Pistachio Tuiles

Serves 8 to 10; Page 75

Active: 30 min.; Total: 2 hr.

Look for ripe mangoes that yield easily to the touch, because they will have the

most vibrant flavor to play off the warming spices in this refreshing sorbet.

- 1 3/4 cups sugar**
- 4 whole cloves**
- 3 green cardamom pods, cracked**
- 2 whole star anise**
- 3 mangoes, peeled and pitted**
- 1 large egg white**
- 2 1/2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour**
- 1 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted**
- 6 Tbsp. finely chopped pistachios**

1 For the sorbet: In a small saucepan, bring 1 1/2 cups of the sugar, the cloves, cardamom, star anise, and 2 1/3 cups water to a boil. Reduce the heat to low, and cook for 10 minutes. Remove the syrup from the heat, let cool, and then chill for 1 hour.

2 Pour the syrup through a fine sieve into a blender, discarding the spices, and add the mango; blend until smooth. Pour into an ice cream maker and process according to the manufacturer's instructions. Scrape the sorbet into a container and freeze.

3 For the tuiles: Heat the oven to 400° and line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. In a small bowl, whisk the remaining 1/4 cup sugar with the egg white until frothy; stir in the flour and butter. Drop 1 teaspoon of the batter on a baking sheet and spread into a 3-inch circle. Repeat with the remaining batter, then sprinkle each circle with 1 teaspoon pistachios. Bake the tuiles until golden brown, 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer to a rack and let cool. Serve the tuiles with scoops of the sorbet.

**Making more food than your guests
can possibly eat is the Egyptian way**



Zeidy likes to present this dish of barley, feta, and roasted vegetables to the table and then mix it right before serving. See page 76 for recipe.

• FROM THE SAVEUR •

TEST KITCHEN

For this issue our test kitchen discovered the joys of garlic milk, learned that not all clams are equal, and mastered the making of Cairo's beloved bread

Hello, Garlic Milk

Why our new favorite ingredient should be yours, too

We were surprised to learn that for her summer garage party (see page 38), Amy Thielen included milk in the parsley bagna cauda she made to accompany her tender roast pork shoulder (see page 52 for recipe). Turns out it's not that untraditional—northern Italians sometimes add cream to the anchovy, garlic, and olive oil sauce before serving it as a dip for raw vegetables and toast. In Thielen's recipe, the concentrated milk, cooked down slowly with garlic cloves, makes the bagna cauda a perfect balance for the roast pork, but we love the sauce on other meats as well, like chicken and steaks. Inspired, we also used leftover garlic milk to make mashed potatoes and in béchamel for lasagna, and it worked perfectly.



Clams: A Primer

How to recognize and get the most out of summer's best shellfish

Chef Chris Fischer (see “A Gathering by the Sea,” page 54) loves using topneck clams (1), a medium-size variety with a lot of liquor, in his clams and mussels dish (see page 59 for recipe). But there are many other types of clams, each with its own attributes and ideal uses: Large chowder clams (2) are best in their namesake New England stew, while cherrystones (3) are perfect grilled or eaten raw in sushi. Manilas (4), a Pacific Coast variety similar in taste to littlenecks, and tiny green-flecked cockles (5) pair well in spaghetti with garlic and chile flakes. Littlenecks (6) are ideal in a raw bar, while the meat of gargantuan Atlantic surf clams (7) is typically cut into strips, breaded, and fried. And razor clams (8), easily recognizable by their long, narrow shell, are great steamed or chopped for a ceviche. —Farideh Sadeghin, *Test Kitchen Director*

TEST KITCHEN TIP

“We love Amy Thielen’s trick of chopping small amounts of whole cumin seeds with a couple of drops of oil for her smoky baba ghanouj (see page 45 for recipe). It breaks down the seeds without dirtying a grinder and infuses the oil with its flavor.”

—BEN MIMS, FOOD EDITOR



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**All elements are subject to availability.
Departures in September & October, 2015.*

The Key to Aish Baladi

To get these Egyptian flatbreads to puff properly, crank up the heat

Coming from the word *balad*, meaning “my country” or “my people,” *aish baladi* (“the people’s bread”) is such a staple in modern Cairo that the government subsidizes it. (Politicians have even used it to court votes.) Similar to pita but made with whole-wheat flour, traditional *aish baladi* is baked on the floors of giant scorching-hot ovens in the city’s bustling market bakeries. You can achieve similar results at home by placing a baking stone in your oven and letting it heat until it’s scorching. This ensures that the stone is hot enough to instantly steam the water in the dough, a crucial factor in the bread’s puffing up. Equally important is the thinness of the dough, which should be rolled out to 1/6-inch thick. A thin skin forms, which traps the steam, inflating the bread once it hits the searing stone. —*Jake Cohen, Test Kitchen Assistant*

Aish Baladi

Makes 16 breads

Active: 35 min.; Total: 4 hr.

- 1 Tbsp. active dry yeast
- 2 1/2 cups water, heated to 105°
- 5 cups whole-wheat flour, plus more for dusting
- 1 Tbsp. kosher salt
- 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil, plus more for greasing
- Cracked wheat bran, for proofing (optional)

1 In a large bowl, whisk the yeast with the water and let stand until foamy, 10 minutes. Add 2 1/2 cups of the whole-wheat flour and stir until smooth. Cover the dough with plastic wrap and let stand for 30 minutes.

2 Uncover the dough and, using your hand, stir the salt and oil into the dough and then add the remaining 2 1/2 cups whole-wheat flour and mix until the dough comes together. Scrape the dough onto a lightly floured work surface and knead until smooth and elastic, about 10 minutes. Place the dough in a large bowl greased with oil and cover with plastic wrap. Let stand until doubled in size, about 1 1/2 hours.

3 Place a baking stone on a rack in the oven and heat the oven to 500° for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, punch the dough down and divide into 16 equal pieces. Roll each piece into a ball and then flatten into a 5-inch circle. Lightly sprinkle the cracked wheat bran, if using, or more whole-wheat flour over 2 parchment paper-lined baking sheets. Divide the dough circles between the baking sheets and loosely cover with a kitchen towel. Let stand until slightly puffed, about 30 minutes.

4 Working in batches, place the dough circles on the hot baking stone, spaced 2 inches apart, and bake until puffed and lightly charred in spots, 6 to 8 minutes. Transfer the breads to a rack and let cool for 5 minutes before serving.

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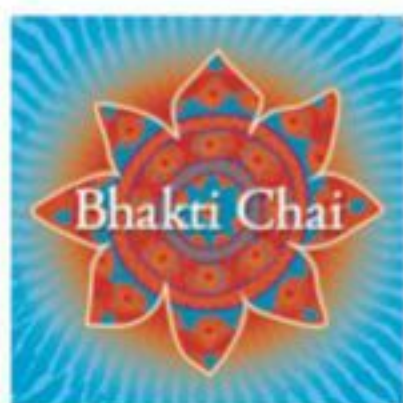


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The Floating Dinner Party

BERGOUHEY-VIELLENAVE, FRANCE
AUGUST 27, 2000

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH
BY MIMI OKA AND DOUG FITCH

We call ourselves “sustenance artists”; we explore the relationship between art and food. In one piece, called “Orphic Memory Sausages,” we asked people to give us possessions that evoked a personal memory, then ground them up and stuffed them into sausage casings, turning them into “memory links.” Another involved a 45-foot loaf of bread paraded through a country town. Here, in one of our more ambitious projects, we invited 24 guests to enjoy a multi-course dinner while floating on a river in Bergouey-Viellenave, France. It was a visual pun on *île flottante*—a French dessert of meringue that floats in crème anglaise. It was entertaining in both senses of the word: We were entertaining them with dinner; they were entertaining everyone else with the spectacle. We constructed a floating table with just the right buoyancy—diners’ legs dangled in the water, but no one sank. Guests wore evening attire with wet suits underneath and were rowed out to their seats in little boats. Even the mayor came. They ate a menu inspired by the river: eel, frogs’ legs, and a green “pond soup,” made with sorrel and celery root purée. And to close out the meal, the chef, in full whites, jumped into the river and swam over pushing a small floating island carrying—what else?—*îles flottantes*.

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